

BRIGGS

Brief Annals of the Times and People

From Gum Springs to 1960

Being Bits of History of the Community First
Known as Gum Springs, Later as Taylor's Gin,
and for the Last Sixty-odd Years as Briggs.



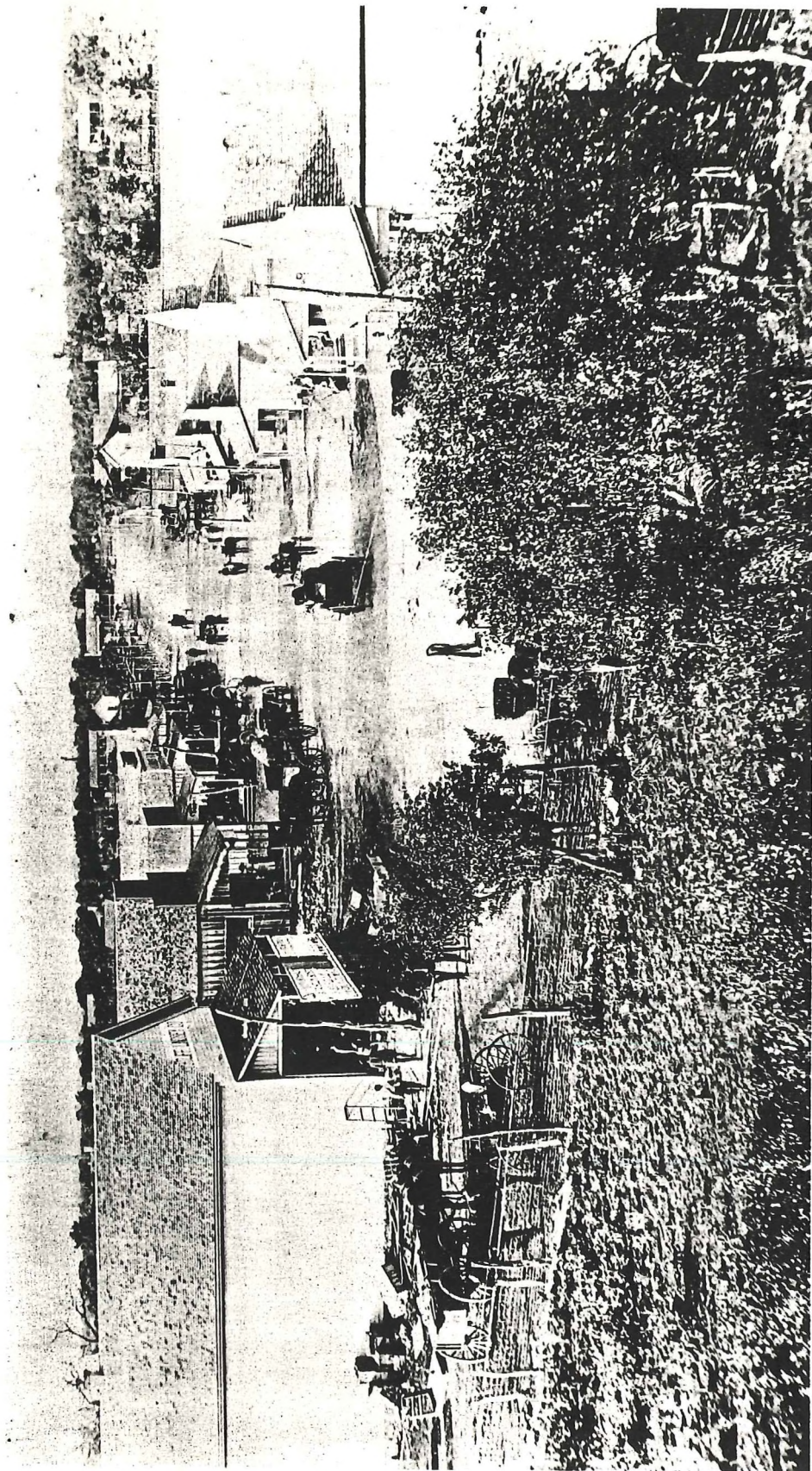
BURNET COUNTY

Compiled and Edited

by

ERNEST LANGFORD

College Station, Texas



HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS: BRIGGS SOON AFTER THE CENTURY TURNED
Looking North Along Main Street.
The years have taken their toll so that little remains today of what was once a thriving,
prosperous business community.

To the Memory

of

THOSE PIONEER FAMILIES

Who Blazed the Trail

Which led to

GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

These Annals of a Later Day

Are Respectfully Dedicated

FOREWORD

No one knows exactly when the community of Gum Springs came into being. Of one fact, however, we may be reasonably certain--a number of families had settled there and within its environs about one hundred years ago. Several years later a schoolhouse had been erected--a building which was used also for church services and community gatherings. And by the early 1880s a teacher had been employed on a full-time basis--if the teaching of a four- or five-month school can be considered full-time employment. By 1892 the Prairie View Methodist church building had been erected. And in the words of two or three nonagenarians whose memories go back that far, "a spirit of community consciousness" seemed to permeate the whole neighborhood.

To catch a glimpse here and there of that "spirit of community consciousness" is one of the reasons which prompt us to undertake the compilation of these annals. Not only that: We are interested in how the people lived and in the houses in which they lived; what they did for amusement and what social activities they created; where they worshipped and their church affiliation; their interest in "doing better by their children than they themselves had been done by"; who married whom and who of Briggs today can trace their ancestry back to those first families--and so on and on. Many of those questions are answered in these pages--by people who have spent most of their lives in Briggs, or by others whose roots run deep there and who for one reason or another have maintained an active interest in the times and the people.

It will be evident to the reader that these notes are the work of many people. Wherever possible authors have been named. But because of their very personal interest, we owe a debt of lasting gratitude to Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, Edwin Harton and Clarence Dillingham. Without their help these annals of Briggs, the times and people, could never have been put together. And for typing and cutting of stencils we are indebted to Mmes. Florence Neelley and Dian Jones of the staff of the city of College Station.

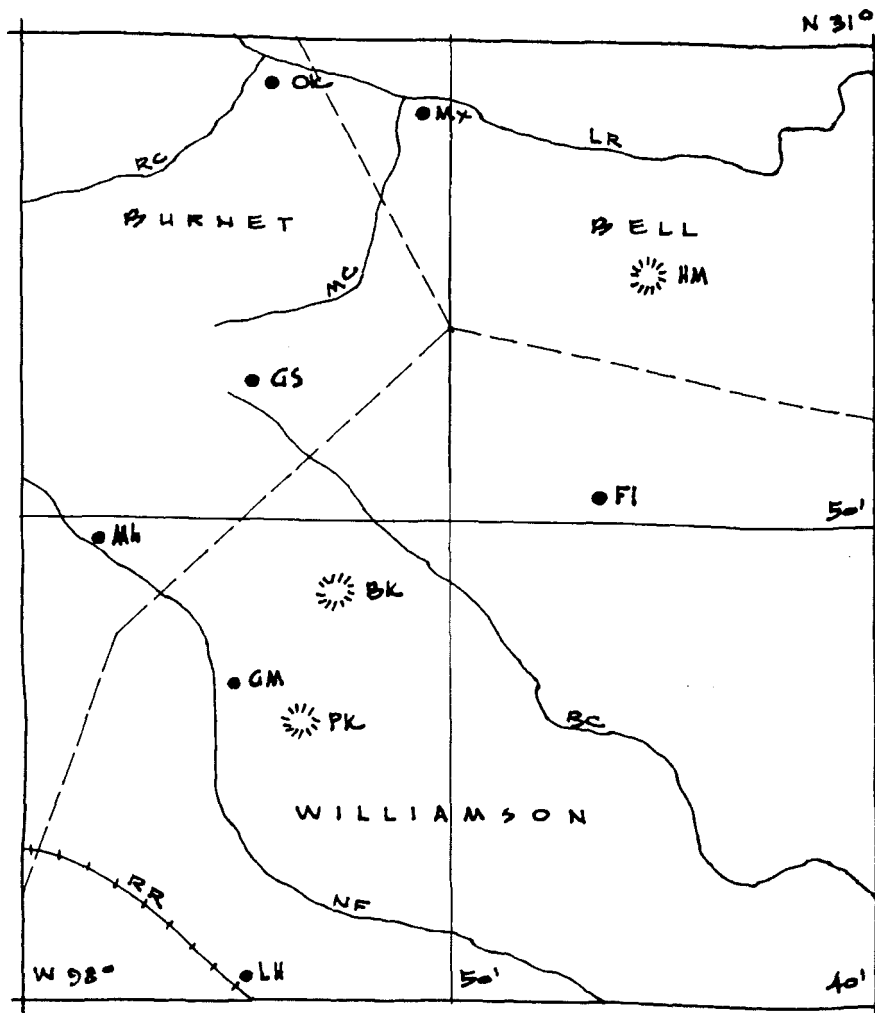
Although typing of the manuscript was practically completed on the date indicated below, readers will note that certain additions have been made in cutting the stencils for reproduction.

Ernest Langford

January 30, 1963

BEFORE TAYLOR'S GIN AND BRIGGS

About 1885



LEGEND

LR: Lampasas River
 RC: Rocky Creek
 MC: Mill Creek
 BC: Berry Creek
 NF: North Fork
 San Gabriel
 River

HM: Hog Mountain
 BK: Bald Knob
 PK: Pilot Knob

FI: Florence
 GM: Gabriel Mills
 LH: Liberty Hill
 MH: Mahomet
 MX: Maxdale
 OK: Oakalla

RR: Austin and
 Northwestern
 Railroad

GS: Gum Springs
 Community not
 shown on map.
 We have shown
 its location

Sketch Showing Common Corner of Bell, Burnet and Williamson Counties. No scale.

The community of Gum Springs was in existence at this time. The names Taylor's Gin and Briggs were to come later...the first in 1888, the second in 1898.

What roads were in existence were little better than trails, but such as they were, they made travel possible between the community of Gum Springs and its neighboring towns and villages.

As a matter of general interest, waters which fell at the site of old Gum Springs made their way to the Gulf of Mexico via Berry Creek, the San Gabriel, the little, and the Brazos rivers... which of course they do today.

This sketch based on a topographic survey of 1885... Liberty Hill has been moved a few minutes north to show its relation to other communities.

GUM SPRINGS

There has never been any doubt about the "official" existence of Taylor's Gin and Briggs. As is noted in several places elsewhere in the text, Taylor's Gin was the name given to the first post office established in the Gum Springs community--and that name gave way to Briggs in 1898. But as for Gum Springs--well, we have been asked by a score or more of people where that name came from and when it was first used. In answer to these questions we plead total ignorance. The two oldest people who might possibly know something about the origin of the name are Mr. Henry Campbell of McKenzie, Tennessee, and Mrs. W. J. Taylor of Florence. Both taught there in the original Gum Springs school--and both say that the name was in use when they first went there.

Having just about given up all hope of running down any information as to how the name came into use, our next effort was directed towards finding documents in which the name was used. Four have come to light thus far: The minute book of the Gum Springs Literary Society, Maudie Fewell's autograph album, Brison Draper's report card for the first term of the school year 1897-98, and a "Dimit" granted to Mr. J. W. Weeks from the Gum Springs Alliance on February 20, 1892. Several pages were given to the first three in the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. The fourth-- Mr. Weeks's "Dimit"--has just come to light recently--through the courtesy of Mr. John G. Key III of Winters, Texas, a great-grandson of Mr. Weeks.

The "Dimit" is quoted under the Weeks-Dick families later on. What interests us most right now is the seal on the "Dimit"--the seal of the Gum Springs Alliance. And that may ultimately lead us along interesting paths. But for the moment the seal is irrefutable proof that the name was recognized and used by what came to be the Farmers' Alliance. And that is worth a paragraph or two.

In 1874 or 1875 there was organized in Lampasas County what was called the "Texas Alliance"--an organization of citizens perfected for mutual protection against horse thieves and land sharks, and for cooperation in rounding up strayed livestock. A secret ritual of three degrees was adopted and women were admitted on equal standing with men. The movement spread immediately to surrounding communities. And Gum Springs being only twenty miles or so away--and a farming community at that--it should come as no surprise to us that the Gum Springs Alliance came into existence. But it is more likely that by this time the "Texas Alliance" had given way to the Farmers' Alliance, and what we have is in reality the seal of the "chapter" of the latter at Gum Springs. Anyhow, the impression of the seal is as clear as if it were stamped yesterday, save for the fact that a fold in the paper makes the number of the Gum Springs Alliance illegible.

The only conclusion we can draw from all of this is that if the Farmers' Alliance--which in its day came to be a powerful agrarian movement--recognized Gum Springs to the extent of chartering the Gum Springs Alliance, then the name must have been at least of quasi-historical significance in the 1880s.

The question then of how and when the name Gum Springs came into use must rest at this point--but in the hope that somewhere something is stashed away--in an

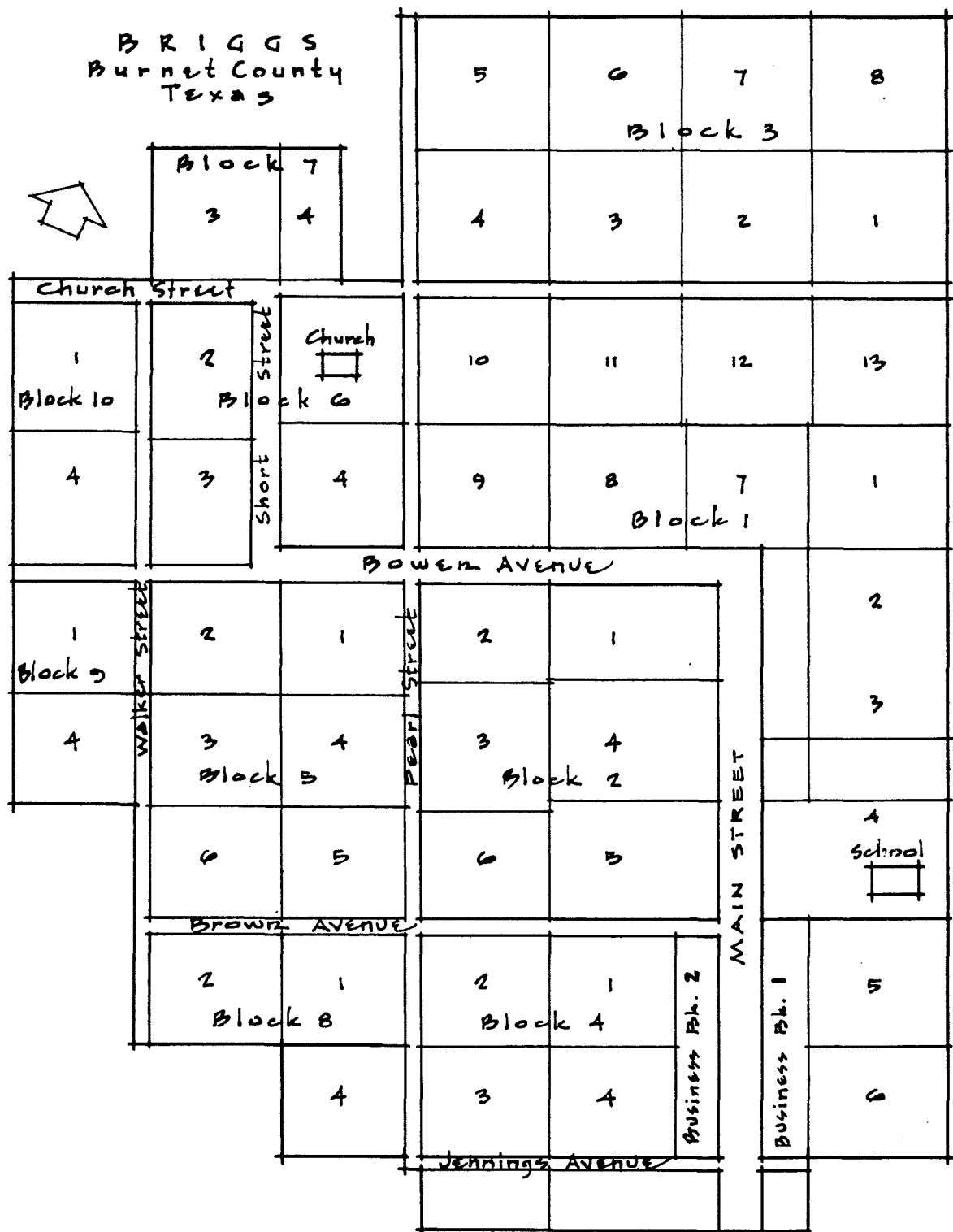
GUM SPRINGS

old attic trunk, some library, county or state archive--the hope that something will ultimately come to light to tell us exactly how Gum Springs came into being.

(We may add sort of parenthetically that we made a conjecture about the origin of the name in the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. But since that was little more than a guess we will forego repeating it here.)

PLAT OF BRIGGS.

About 1900



Approximate Scale: 1"=250'
 Business block 1 divided into 14
 lots; Bk 2 into 10 lots.
 WALTER ROUNTREE, SURVEYOR

NOTES CONCERNING THE PLAT OF BRIGGS

The copy of the plat of Briggs from which our copy was made was prepared by Mr. Wayne A. Barton, county clerk of Burnet County, for the Briggs homecoming in 1958:

The following extract copy of the Plat of the Town of Briggs was prepared by the County Clerk of Burnet County from the official records of said office, as a courtesy to the residents, former residents and friends of the town of Briggs, for their express use in connection with their Home Coming Celebration.

s/ Wayne A. Barton
County Clerk
Burnet County, Texas

The following acknowledgements are then appended:

State of Texas) Know all men by these presents, that we,
County of Burnet) W. A. Nichols of Briggs, Burnet County, Texas,
and Stephen Taylor of Florence, Williamson County, Texas, hereby
acknowledge the above map of Briggs to be a true and correct plat
of Briggs as it was surveyed for us by Walter Rountree, Surveyor
of Georgetown, Texas, and hereby declare the same to be our act
and deed.

Witness our hands this 23rd day of July, A. D. 1903.

s/ Stephen Taylor
s/ W. A. Nichols

State of Texas) Before me, W. W. Gardner, a Notary Public
County of Williamson) in and for said County and State, on this
day personally appeared Stephen Taylor known to me to be the
person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument of
writing acknowledged to me for himself that he had signed the
same for the purpose and consideration therein expressed.
Given under my hand and seal of Office at Florence, Texas, this
23rd day of July, A. D. 1903.

Seal

s/ W. W. Gardner
Notary Public in and for
Williamson County, Texas

The State of Texas) Before me, F. A. Harrell, Justice of the
County of Burnet) Peace and Ex officio Notary Public in and
for said County, State of Texas, this day personally came and
appeared W. A. Nichols, to me well known, and who, after being
by me duly sworn, did depose and say that he signed the Plat of
the town of Briggs for the purpose and consideration therein
expressed.

NOTES CONCERNING THE PLAT OF BRIGGS

Sworn to and subscribed before me, witness my hand and seal of office, in Briggs, this 26th day of October, A. D. 1903.

Seal

s/ F. A. Harrell, J. P.
Ex Officio Notary Public,
Burnet County, Texas

Filed and placed of record
Sept. 1st, 1911, at 11:50 A. M.
s/ J. H. Chamberlain,
County Clerk

Some general notes about the plat:

Certain easement strips along the north, east and south boundries are not shown on our reproduction. Neither are the various lots into which the business blocks are divided. Nor are the names of the surveys bounding the plat, which are the Pruitt survey, the Isaac Harriss survey and the Sevier Tadlock survey, located respectively at the southwest, southeast, and northeast limits of the plat. The only two buildings shown on the plat are the schoolhouse and the Baptist church. Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 of Block 2 are not numbered on the plat. We have added these numbers, assuming that the sequence of numbering of lots in Blocks 4, 5 and 8 would be valid here.

There is some doubt as to when Mr. Rountree actually made the survey. The fact that a deed to be mentioned later refers to Lot 10, Block 3--as well as metes and bounds--would indicate that the survey was made about 1898, the year the first Langford home was built. At any rate, we may fix the year as about 1900 as Briggs only came into being "officially" in mid-1898. There is no way of accounting for the delay in the acknowledgements, nor for waiting another eight years before filing the plat for record.

Old-timers who lived in Briggs in 1900 or thereabouts, and who may have occasion to look at this plat, will experience a degree of nostalgia in picking out the locations of the homes of their youth.

And just as a matter of historical interest, I have copies of two deeds of sale which apply respectively to Lot 10 of Block 3 and the 100 x 301-foot strip immediately north of the lot on which the schoolhouse is located. The first deed is that of Stephen Taylor to M. L. Langford for \$50; the second is for the sale of the 100 x 301-foot strip by A. W. Horn to M. L. Langford for \$300.

THE BIGGEST LITTLE TOWN IN TEXAS!

According to the Handbook of Texas: Briggs, Texas, was named for Mrs. Henry Briggs. It is located in the rolling prairie of northeastern Burnet County. The community was first settled by Jim Drake in 1852. In 1880 Steve Taylor erected a gin and in 1882 a general store in which a post office was established March 27, 1888. Surrounded by farmers and ranchers, Briggs consists of several business houses, a gin, three churches, and a consolidated school. (The gin has later been torn down and moved.)

Now if you should be as dissatisfied as I am with this extremely brief sign-board notice and want to read of this mighty-mite community, we recommend that you read one of the two or three histories written by one of its favorite sons, Ernest Langford, professor of architecture emeritus and former head of the division of architecture at Texas A&M College... As fanatically fond as we are about history in all of its stages and ages, the people of Briggs interest us more than its events. There is something about them that up until now we cannot explain or account for. It is a bit of the unusual, from color to culture--like the tremendous pull it has upon its native sons and daughters who have departed to various places--all over. For example, a town with 100 people having about 2,000 visitors for two days. Or this same town having a scholastic enrollment of, believe it or not, 101. The 100% of whites is certainly an uncommon thing, even in big Texas. We haven't the exact percent--but we know it is much higher than the average--where almost every adult and youth belongs to some protestant Christian church. Acts of extreme violence are almost nil. On the other hand, cultural accomplishments are out of all proportion to the number of kids who have been born there. Illiteracy is zero. There is either very little moral turpitude or there are no gossipers... My major disappointment of 1959 was not being able to attend the Briggs homecoming. Perhaps if I could mingle with the products of these stalwarts of courage and character who established and are maintaining that remarkable community I might find some of the answers to some of these intriguing questions.

If the old proverb is true--and I believe it is--the sprout bends like its tree was bent. After mingling with the sprouts of the second, third and perhaps fourth generations we hope to come back and report whether the sprout made the old tree look small and good. If so, then Briggs will have made a tremendous contribution to many and various places and people. It will also put heredity several laps ahead of environment as a factor in character building. On the other hand, if the spineless sprout wilts on the roots of the mighty oak into a clump of brush from the burning rays of a great heritage carved out by the horny hands of a strong character--we don't know. We are going to look and see... September 3-4.

--"Pete Shady"

THE BIGGEST LITTLE TOWN IN TEXAS!

"The Biggest Little Town in Texas!" is from the pen of Dr. J. Gordon Bryson of Bastrop. With slight variations in text it is reproduced from the Bertram Enterprise of August 25, 1960, by permission of Dr. Bryson and Mr. N. Oliver Cox, editor and publisher of the Enterprise. Under the pseudonym of "Pete Shady," Dr. Bryson is busily engaged in writing the history of what he is pleased to call "Shin Oak Ridge"--roughly that quadrilateral of Central Texas whose corners are Briggs, Florence, Liberty Hill and Bertram.

EARLY HISTORY OF BRIGGS

Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

(We are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Nichols for the following information concerning the early history of Briggs and surrounding communities. This paper was read at the Briggs Homecoming September 4, 1955 by Mrs. Fred J. Juby. A greater portion of this information was obtained from Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Nichols, some 20 years ago. They are both deceased now.)

The earliest history of Briggs dates back to 1852 when Mr. Jim Drake took up a pre-emption from the State of Texas and settled a portion of the land west of Briggs formerly owned by T. C. Cloud but presently owned by Floyd and Dewey Black. Another section of land known as the Biddock land lying just north and northwest of the Drake place was put on the market by the State a few years later and in the spring of 1882, Mr. Biddock offered it for sale at the meager price of \$3.10 per acre. One hundred sixty acres of this land was bought by Mr. Steve Taylor, Sr. One hundred sixty acres was bought by Mr. Jack Taylor and three hundred and twenty acres purchased by Bob Long. Several hundred acres now owned by Mrs. Bryan Skaggs and Mr. R. R. Crooks was offered for sale at the same time for 50 cents per acre, but there was no sale for it. However, some years later, John Landon, Sr. bought it for \$2.50 per acre.

Just east of the Biddock land were several thousand acres that was bought by John E. Landon, Sr., Jack Juby and Thomas Washburn, pioneer settlers of this section, who came to America from England in 1871. The Washburn place later sold to J. S. Dillingham, whose heirs still have possession of it. The Juby land is now owned by his three sons, John, Fred and Jim Juby. The rich, fertile black land soil south of Briggs now being cultivated to the benefit of numbers of people was bald rolling prairie back in 1893 when R. M. J. Pulliam purchased the land and a large herd of cattle from Williamson County was brought and placed on it for grazing. None of this land was under fence at that time. Many shepherds herded their sheep on the open range where freedom prevailed for all. At the death of Simpson Pulliam in 1893 Dick Pulliam inherited his father's land and put into cultivation 1,100 acres in one block still known as the Pulliam farm, and owned by Mrs. Maude Pulliam, Rucker Northington, Mr. Wall, S. R. Dillingham, Dock Williams and Hiram Raines.

The land that the little town of Briggs now stands on was owned by Steve Taylor, Sr., who came to Texas from Tennessee in 1880. Mr. Taylor purchased this land from Mr. Bill Gann, a pioneer settler who settled here in 1855 from Missouri.

Mr. Steve Taylor, Sr. built the first store in Briggs in 1882. Two years earlier he built a gin which was located about where Mr. W. T. Harton now lives. This he sold to Archie Key and John Taylor, who in 1887 sold it to Mr. George West, who moved it two miles southeast of Briggs and for many years was known as the West gin.

The first gin, however, ever run near Briggs was a tread wheel gin owned by Mr. Biddock and located north of Briggs which would now be in the north side of Idus Champlin's pasture. This gin was run with horses by Mr. Frank Cronin and John Ellason in 1903.

EARLY HISTORY OF BRIGGS

When Mr. W. A. Nichols, better known as Luck Nichols, came to Briggs from Tennessee in 1882 there was no post office here at that time. Different citizens of the community would take turn in going to Florence, in Williamson County, and bring the mail which was left at the Taylor store, and each one called there for it. In 1888 a petition was sent to Washington asking for a post office for Briggs. While the necessary routine of matters was being attended to and bids sent in, W. A. Nichols was secured to carry the mail from Briggs to Florence, a distance of 12 miles, which was a half day on horseback. He made the trip on each Tuesday and Saturday, receiving as his pay 75 cents per day. Mr. Nichols was thus the first mail carrier in Briggs.

The store that was built in 1882 by Steve Taylor, Sr., and operated by Mr. Hodges, was sold to Ellis Bennett in 1884 and he in turn sold it to J. W. Edgar in 1886. This became the location for the new post office, Mr. J. W. Edgar being the first postmaster. The post office was opened in 1888.

The next business establishment was operated by A. W. Horn, pioneer resident, who came from Tennessee and located here in 1889. He built a blacksmith shop near the general mercantile store building, and operated it for 13 years before selling it to Bob Patterson.

Mr. Mather Brown bought the post office from J. W. Edgar in 1897. Thus far the little settlement had been called "Taylor's Gin," but soon after Mr. Brown came into possession the name was changed to "BRIGGS." Dr. William Hazlewood was influential in getting the town called Briggs after his mother-in-law, Mrs. Henry D. Briggs.

Another large tract of land containing several thousand acres lying northeast of Briggs was bought by S. R. and H. C. Skaggs in the early 80's from several parties who had taken pre-emptions from the State some time before. The deal was made through three attorneys, R. H. Ward, T. E. Hammond and T. B. Timberlake, who composed a law firm in Burnet. They worked through D. Cordover, a land dealer in Austin. One party who had a claim on this tract of land lived in Europe, several were Germans living near Austin, and at one time it was necessary to hire an interpreter for \$15.00 to make the necessary transactions. It required over a year's time to get in touch with all the interested parties, and make a clear title to the land. The land is now owned by the Skaggs heirs.

Still another large tract of land lying north of the present town of Briggs and for many years known as the Henry J. McGuire ranch was purchased by his father in the 70's and taken over by Henry J. McGuire in 1882, who had a herd of sheep in Williamson County and needed more grass land for grazing. This land was not fenced and did not have any improvements of any kind. Mr. McGuire assisted by Tom Rudasille kept vigilant watch over the sheep, as the wolves were so thick they killed their prey even in the day time. The McGuire ranch is now owned by Mr. J. M. Boren.

The deal for this large tract of land was made through D. Cordover, the land dealer in Austin, who dealt with the various parties who had taken pre-emptions from the State only for speculation. It was very difficult to get clear title

EARLY HISTORY OF BRIGGS

and some of the settlers later lost their land because of faulty titles.

The Walter Dillingham and C. P. Cloud land lying also north of Briggs was bought by J. S. Dillingham for \$2.50 per acre. He came here from Travis County in 1855. This land was formerly owned by Judge Cook of Burnet, Homer DeWolf of Briggs and Swanta M. Swinson of New York. Mr. Dillingham had started West to find more range for his cattle and sheep, but when he planted his feet in Burnet County, first on Toby Creek and in the same year, on this land near Briggs, he was here to stay. Mr. Dillingham is now deceased and the ranch is now owned by his heirs.

In 1882 a school house was built at Gum Springs or West gin where church services and other community gatherings were held. Among the first teachers were Mr. W. C. Tabor, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Bob Dick and Miss Emma Taber. This being an unhandy location, another building was erected in 1894, which is the present location of the Briggs School. An acre of land on which the first building was erected, was donated by Mr. Steve Taylor. It was built before the town was built, by public subscription. Mr. Homer DeWolf took the subscriptions and each citizen gave or readily subscribed to this worthy cause. Several of the citizens gave so freely that Mr. DeWolf gave a portion of their donations back.

The first teacher of this new school was Mr. Jack Smith, who taught in the Briggs school for five years.

The Methodist Church was built about two miles south of Briggs and was dedicated the 3rd Sunday in May, 1892, and was called the Prairie View Church, and remained there until 1906, at which time it was moved to Briggs, and it has since been moved to Lampasas and converted into a parsonage for the pastors of the Lampasas Circuit.

The Missionary Baptist Church was first located on the Burnet and Williamson County line on what is now known as the Jackson farm. It was moved to its present location in 1896. The Church of Christ was opened for public worship on Sunday, December 17, 1927.

In 1896 the town of Briggs was surveyed by Mr. Walter Rountree and laid off into lots and the various streets were named. Among the prominent citizens who assisted in the development at this time were: Messrs. Mark Patterson, George West, Milton Draper, Will Hasty, S. R. Skaggs, A. W. Horn, W. A. Nichols, Bill Gann, Jack Taylor, W. S. Dillingham, Homer DeWolf, L. P. Perkins, H. J. McGuire, J. T. Harton, Jack Juby, William Williams, Dr. John McCarty, J. T. Hall, Sr., J. S. Dillingham, Mr. Eubanks, and Tom Rudisille.

The person living the longest in the same house in the Briggs vicinity (as far as known) is Mr. Lee Green, he having been born where he now lives, and has lived in the same house 60 years.

* * *

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BRIGGS : ITS GROWTH AND DECLINE

The once flourishing little city of Briggs has dwindled through the years until today it is but the mere shadow of itself of the 1920s-1930s--and for many of us but the memory of prosperity of better days. From a mere handful of people who settled in the Gum Springs area eighty or ninety years ago, Briggs reached its peak of prosperity at about the third-point of this century. From a population of about 300 and some twelve or fifteen business establishments in the 1930s, the population has declined to possibly 100 and the businesses to five as of 1960.

There are many reasons for this decline--paved highways, high-powered automobiles, mechanized farming, to mention only a few. For years on end the economy was geared to agriculture--and until the tractor replaced the horse and mule a proportionately large number of people were required to man the farms. Save for an occasional lean year, bumper crops grew on the blackland farms. But with the coming of the tractor, the four-row cultivator, combines and mechanical cotton-pickers, the need for manpower was no longer what it used to be. One farmer could now do the work of several. Then came the "plow-up" campaign of the 1930s. Cotton acreage was reduced, migratory labor was no longer in demand, and people simply were forced to seek employment elsewhere.

The final blow came with the soil bank program. The few small farmers who remained sold out to the Big Uncle, with the result the small farms which remain in cultivation are planted to feed crops. When King Cotton lost his power, Briggs lost her people. Those who decided to stay--those whose roots run deep here, who own their homes and other property--now make their daily roundtrips to Fort Hood where employment and good salaries are available. The few who remain to work here find employment in the school, on the county roads, in the post office, and as owners and operators of the few businesses.

Devastating fires have taken their toll of homes and business houses through the years. Others have been torn down or moved away. A recent count shows forty-one homes--eight of them vacant--and five places of business in Briggs. Two of the latter are open three or four days each week. Within what might be called the "city limits" there are eleven homes occupied by one person each, eighteen with two, six with three, one with four, two with five, two with six, and one with ten. And there are only 18 children of school age within the "city limits."

But there will always be a Briggs. Its memory is cherished by hundreds of people whose roots run deep here--people who were born here, who were married here, whose forebears have found eternal rest here--people who though they may live far removed from the environs of their childhood find time to return to walk the familiar paths of other days. Yes, there will always be a Briggs!

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS

Although the photograph which is used as a frontispiece was made about 1910, practically all of the buildings shown were in existence in 1900. The oldest one is the second on the left, the general store owned and operated by Mr. J. W. Edgar. Others were built through succeeding years, the newest probably being that of the Briggs State Bank--a building erected in 1909 and still standing.

Beginning at the left, the first building is the general store of Ratliff-Lindsey Company. Erected about 1900 by Mr. W. T. Jennings, it had come into the possession of the Ratliff-Lindsey Company sometime before the picture was made. The building was razed in the 1930s. It was sold to Snow Skaggs whose idea was that he would use the materials in the erection of sheds and other structures on his ranch. However, he later sold it to a lumber company in Austin who tore it down and took the lumber to that city.

The second building on the left is the J. W. Edgar general mercantile store. Erected in the late 1890s, it was sold to Ratliff-Moore Company in 1912. When John E. Moore, Mr. G. A. Ratliff's son-in-law, purchased an interest in the store the name came to be the Ratliff-Moore Company. The building was destroyed by fire in 1928.

The third building on the left, a drugstore at the time the picture was made, stood on the site of the first blacksmith shop--a building erected by Mr. A. W. Horn in the late 1890s. Later Mrs. Alice Skaggs owned a millinery shop on this site. And the first switchboard of the Briggs Rural Telephone Company was located here about 1904 or 1905. Destroyed by fire in 1928.

The fourth building on the left was known as the W. B. Moore building at the time the picture was made and was being rented by the Ratliff-Lindsey Company for display purposes, especially the display of furniture. Destroyed by fire in 1928.

The fifth building on the left is that of the Briggs State Bank. Erected in 1909, it is one of the two which are standing today. It serves now as a storage room for the Horace Clinkscales general store and as a "domino hall." The J. T. Hall building was torn down about 1945 to make way for a new one to be erected by H. W. Bizzell who had previously bought the bank building for use as a warehouse. There is a fireplace in the back room of the old bank building--and it is this room that has become the "domino hall"--an all-the-year-round popular place, especially during the winter months when a fire is kept burning by players who bring their own wood. Mr. Horace Clinkscales later bought both the Bizzell and the bank buildings; and it is in these two that he now owns and manages his general store. The post office is also located in the building--and in addition to managing his store Mr. Clinkscales also serves as postmaster.

Next in order on the left are the J. T. Hall general store and post office and the switchboard building which is the second of two such buildings still standing, but for more about it see under "The Telephone Comes to Briggs."

Other buildings on the left are the Joyce home at the far end of the street; the J. W. Jordan home--the one with the windmill in the rear; the Hart home--

HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS

the one with the chimney; the Williams home--just to the right of the peak of the roof of the R-L store; the J. W. King home--with windmill and tank and just barely visible over the roof of the R-L store; and the Baptist church--to right of flue in the R-L store.

Starting at the right, the first building was known as the Waggoner drugstore, later the J. M. Hart drugstore, and finally the J. F. Taylor drugstore. Dr. Taylor was a younger brother of the first Taylors to settle in the Gum Springs area. He practiced medicine in Briggs for a number of years, arriving there soon after 1900 and leaving about 1915.

The second building is that of the W. E. Clinkscales & Company, the organizers being Messrs. M. Patterson, W. E. Clinkscales, Will Baker and W. E. Gude.

The third building housed at the time of the photograph the grocery store of C. C. Stewart and Jim Johnson. Sometime prior thereto it had housed a cold drink and confectionary business.

The fourth building was owned by Mr. A. B. Jackson. He "stocked" the usual line of groceries and batched in a rear room. He also served as a justice of the peace and notary public. There was a "city well" in front of the building where one could slake his thirst by drawing water with bucket and rope. The post from which the pulley was suspended and a watering trough for livestock are clearly visible in the picture.

The fifth building is the John Joyce blacksmith shop. As mentioned previously, Mr. A. W. Horn owned the first such shop in the community. He later took in as a partner Mr. Robert A. (Bob) Patterson, then several years later sold his interest to Mr. Patterson who moved the shop across the street. Sometime about 1905--possibly as late as 1910--Mr. Patterson sold the shop to Mr. Joyce.

The sixth building is the Hubby jewelry shop and pool hall. The building in later years was used as a warehouse by the R-L Company.

The last building on the right is unidentified.

The first residence in the middle background along the right is the second home of the M. L. Langford family. Built in 1901, it was sold to Mr. G. A. Ratliff on August 4, 1906, for \$650.00--\$25.00 paid in cash, the balance in promissory notes!

Beyond the Langford house stood the Ben Hubby home, and beyond that a house occupied by R. W. Pearce at the time the picture was made. The house in the upper righthand corner is the A. W. Horn home.

There can be no doubt about the time of the year when the picture was made. The two wagons with bales of cotton in them and the loaded wagon on way to the gin are conclusive evidence that the time is the fall of the year--probably late September or the first or middle of October. The year is all that is

HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS

uncertain. Everyone who has seen the picture and who remembers the Briggs of those days fixes the year as about 1910.

* * *

While we may be unable to fix the year the photograph in our frontispiece was made, we are on somewhat surer ground as regards the photograph on Plate 4. For the latter was reproduced as a picture post card and Edwin Harton has made available a copy of that card bearing a cancellation of the Briggs post office of August 29, A. M., 1907. This perforce leads us to the conclusion that the picture was made sometime in late 1906 or early 1907.

In the caption of the picture on Plate 4 the first building at the left is identified as the W. T. Jennings general store. This is true only in that the store was originally owned and operated by Mr. Jennings. By the time the photograph was made the building was occupied by the "Lindsey Daley Co" as that is the sign across the front gable. The sign in the same place on the photograph used as our frontispiece reads "Ratliff Lindsey Co"--a successor to the "Lindsey Daley Co" which in its time had been a successor to the W. T. Jennings Company.

Both photographs encompass the same general view of the main street of Briggs. That of the frontispiece was made from the roof of the W. A. Nichols home, whereas that of Plate 4 was made from the top of the windmill shown in the frontispiece.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs & E.L.

BUSINESSES IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

As has been noted elsewhere, Mr. Stephen Taylor, Sr., erected the first general store in the community of Gum Springs in the early 1880s. Prior thereto the nearest trading center was Florence, some ten miles to the southeast. Lampasas, about twenty miles to the northwest, was also a trading and shopping center, as was Georgetown, some fifteen or eighteen miles beyond Florence. But for the transaction of all trading and selling involving deeds, abstracts, and other legal documents, the people of Gum Springs went to Burnet, about twenty-five miles to the southwest. For close on to half of a century getting to Georgetown, Burnet or Lampasas and back in a day was verily a long day's work. And if cotton were being hauled to Georgetown for shipment elsewhere by rail--well, that was a two-day trip, and one to be undertaken only in fair weather. Nowadays, what with good roads and high-powered automobiles being what they are, Lampasas is a mere twenty minutes away and Burnet and Georgetown only ten minutes farther. But this is not a matter of travel to and from Gum Springs. Rather, it is an attempt to review briefly the various business establishments which have come and gone during the past eighty years.

The very first of these establishments was Mr. Taylor's "country" store. Country is the only word to describe it--that is just what it was. My earliest recollection of it goes back to the late fall or early winter of 1896--possibly the early spring of 1897--when my parents dressed themselves and their four children for the occasion and went there to have their picture taken. An itinerant photographer had set himself up in business in a corner of the store, and what with the proper seats, backdrop and "watch the birdie now" he took pictures of the gay young blades and belles, the older folks and family groups. I still have a copy of the photograph he made that day...but to get back to the store.

By this time Mr. J. W. Edgar had bought the store from Mr. Taylor and from a counter and some boxes placed immediately to the left after entering he conducted the affairs of the federal government. Mr. Edgar had become postmaster and in this corner he located the first Taylor's Gin post office. He must have pleased Washington officials in his conduct of the office for he served as postmaster for ten years.

Somewhat farther back in the store was a longer counter behind which a number of shelves were attached to the wall. Here he displayed various kinds of chewing and smoking tobaccos, snuffs--in cans and bottles--and other "necessities." In the center of the building was another counter at the very front of which were the ubiquitous cracker and sugar barrels. And immediately behind them--I think we called it a "drum"--was a drum of "rattrap" cheese, or what was left of it what with everyone feeling free to help himself to a cracker and a slice of cheese! But for us youngsters--well, we went for the sugar barrel. And that reminds me that Pansy Griffin and I were one day trying to reach the bottom of a barrel which was all but empty. In trying to get to the sugar I reached over too far and fell in--and in trying to rescue me Pansy fell in too!

Once past the crackers, sugar and cheese, the counter was covered with all kinds of "useful" articles--articles such as cotton "ducking," work clothes, shoes, socks, jumpers and overalls.

BUSINESSES IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

Along the right, counter and shelves were filled with goods which appealed to the distaff side of the family--hats, linens, table cloths, handkerchiefs, fans, dresses, piece goods, what have you.

At the very rear of the store one found leather goods for harness making and repairing; light agricultural tools, nails, bolts, screws, wire, and so on. And in the far left corner was the space reserved for the photographer who made pictures by "appointment"--as indeed he did in other communities for miles around.

Hard by the general store was the blacksmith shop of Mr. A. W. Horn. Here he shod horses, sharpened plowshares, shrank tires on buggy and wagon wheels, welded broken pieces of machinery, and in many other ways made himself generally useful in the community. And all in a space probably no greater than 18 by 30 feet, with dirt floor, and equipment which consisted essentially of furnace, bellows and anvil, a few tongs and hammers, a keg or two of horseshoes and nails.

Such is a brief description of the two business establishments in Taylor's Gin in the mid-1890s. It must have been soon thereafter that Mr. Edgar and Mr. Horn built a new store and shop some 300 yards or so to the north at a location which came to be the business area of what was eventually called Briggs. It was around this area that many different businesses were established during the next sixty or seventy years. Clarence Dillingham, whose memory runs back to the 1880s, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs and Edwin Harton have worked up for us a list of the businesses which they remember. Those which are marked with two stars were in the community about 1890 or before; those with a single star date from about 1890 to 1900, give or take a year or two.

BUSINESSES AND BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS

From Gum Springs to 1960

Bank:	The Briggs State Bank
Bars, snack:	Mrs. H. E. Harton and Mrs. J. A. Taylor, 1949, first in Briggs; Mrs. J. M. Caskey, Mrs. Jud Smith, Mrs. Patsy Wooten.
Cafes:	Byron and Merle Hickman, J. P. Godwin, John Henry Lewis*, Marvin Ellason, Mrs. J. T. Hall, Jesse and Willie Tomlinson, H. B. Williams.
Contractors:	J. M. Carpenter, A. W. Horn, M. L. Langford*, Brack Shell, Cy Shelton.
Creameries:	John Binnion, George Buchanan, Willie Tomlinson.
Dentists:	Dr. Patterson, Dr. D. J. Sibley, Dr. Dan Stipp.
Garages and service stations:	C. A. Baker and John Baker, owner and operator, respectively; Denny Bell, Carson Bros., T. R. Carson, I. A. Champlin, Lawrence Champlin, Grover Cook, A. V. Crouch, J. W. & Hubert Dickens, Guthrie & Cameron, C. M. Hasty, J. H. Horn, Juby & Williams, Cecil Humphries, Joe McGlothlin, Martin Reed, Emmett Sherman, Carl Stewart, John L. Taylor, Jesse & Willie Tomlinson, Bryan Williams, Willie Williams.

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BUSINESSES IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

Gins:	Stephen Taylor, Sr.***, G. E. West**, John and Lloyd Ellason, E. L. Eaves, manager for D. C. Reed & Co.
Halls, dance:	Othello Pulliam
Halls, pool:	B. F. Hubby, pool hall and jewelry; Mark and Tom Baker.
Hatcheries:	Leland McAndrew, John Williams.
Laundry:	Roberts & Kemp
Markets, meat:	John Binnion, Hall & Hunt, market and ice house, Jones & Cehand.
Newspapers:	The Briggs Enterprise*, P. H. & H. B. Burke, editors; The Briggs Review, H. B. Burke, editor.
Physicians:	Dr. P. N. Cheatham, Dr. H. L. Edens*, Dr. Glenn Hawks, Dr. W. R. Hazelwood*, Dr. John C. McCarty*, Dr. Pipkin, Dr. J. F. Taylor, Dr. David Watson.
Shops, barber and barbers:	Edd Allard, Aaron Binnion, H. R. Caskey, Albert Cloud, Paul Cox, Wilson Cox, Dave Ellason, H. E. Harton, J. B. Harton, Lamar Hickman, Sam Kerns, Clyde King, John King, J. H. Lewis*, Walton Morgan, Clayton Morris, Jim Napier, C. B. Neal, John Poor, John Reavis, George Rice, Jim Russell, Joe Spencer, Archie Vaughan, Clinton Williams, Elbie Wooten.
Shops, beauty:	Helen's Beauty Shop; Mrs. Helen Arnold, owner and operator.
Shops, blacksmith:	A. W. Horn**, Homer Hutto, John Joyce, Charles Kinsey, A. W. Lanier, R. A. Patterson*, Polk Smith, A. W. Stewart.
Shops, millinery:	Mrs. Alice Skaggs*
Shop, shoe:	John Baker
Stores, drug:	George Briggs*, P. N. Cheatham, W. R. Hazelwood*, L. R. Joyce, Smith Bros., J. J. Waggoner.
Stores, feed:	C. P. Cloud
Stores, general merchandise:	W. E. Clinkscales & Co., Dillingham & Jordan, S. R. Dillingham, J. W. Edgar**, W. E. Gude & Son, W. T. Jennings*, Lindsey-Daley Co., Ratliff-Lindsey Co., Ratliff-Moore Co., G. C. Pulliam, Stephen Taylor, Sr.**
Stores, grocery and confecti- tionery:	John & Tom Baker, Bizzell Grocery & Market, John and Amos Edwards, J. T. Hall*, J. B. Harton & Son, A. B. Jackson*, J. H. Lewis*, McAndrew Bros., Tommy McCormick, Odas Moore, Moore & Harton, Charles Moss, G. C. Pulliam, H. R. Smith, Stewart & Johnson, Wade & Perkins, Grady Williams; Clinkscales, Patterson & Gude, W. E. Clinkscales, Horace Clinkscales, B. F. Lindsey.
Stores, hdwe:	C. A. Baker, Harrell & Burns.
Stores, variety:	Mr. & Mrs. Noel Langford, Mrs. J. C. Wright.
Theaters, mp:	G. C. Pulliam, Richard Pulliam

THE FAMILY GETS THROUGH THE YEAR

What we hope to do here is to preserve in a more detailed way something of the day-to-day activities of the families who came to the Gum Springs community seventy to eighty years ago. References to their ways of life will be found here and there in other sections of the text; but what we want to do is to look at the "typical" family and see if we can how it lived through the year. Much of what we shall have to say comes from correspondence and conversations with people who "went that way." Other observations will come from firsthand knowledge--for my memory takes me back to the mid-1890s or possibly a year or two beyond. What we shall try to do has been done many times before for other areas--and much more completely than what we shall attempt. But simply because we want to preserve something of how a typical family of the Gum Springs era made it through the year prompts us to give several pages to that task.

The probability is that the family whose vicissitudes we hope to trace consisted of husband, wife, and from four to six children. It is also entirely probable that they were tenant farmers. On the other hand, the family might have owned its quarter-section of land--perhaps a little more, probably less. But let the family be renters or owners, of one thing we can be fairly certain--they were honest, hardworking people who went about their daily lives without let or hindrance save when drouth, unseasonal floods or illness overtook them. But above all they were Protestant in their faith and had an abiding trust in the Eternal.

There were more prosperous families in the community--many of them. They had their problems too but they were better prepared to cope with them. Their situation was less hazardous in that they could stand an occasional bad year; but a season without rain--or too much of it--could reduce the small farmer to destitute circumstances. In a very real sense a dry year could "wipe a man out."

Let us start then by looking at the house in which our typical family lived. Without exception it was a "box" house, a type of construction described in more detail elsewhere in the text. In all probability its floor plan and area were something like those shown at the top of Plate 3. The roof was wood shingles. There might be a ceiling in the house but there were no screens at the doors and windows. The house was heated in the winter months by a log fire built in an open fireplace--and in cold weather a wood fire was always kept burning in the kitchen stove. And in passing we may note that this latter fire served also to heat the water for Saturday's bath. The open fireplace also served another purpose--coals and ashes were heaped on the rimmed cover of a Dutch oven in which bread and potatoes were baked.

Getting through the winter could be hazardous but with good luck our family made it without too many difficulties. They might suffer the usual colds, possibly measles or whooping cough, or something like that. But even here they were resourceful--and that requires a paragraph or two.

Medical knowledge in the Gum Springs area in the days which concern us was scant and drugs few. Prior to the arrival of the first doctor in the community in 1891 or 1892, the family was pretty much on their own when illness

THE FAMILY GETS THROUGH THE YEAR

struck and had to shift for themselves. Most of their "medical" knowledge came from folklore--but even so they knew that something had to be done when one of their number became ill. For colds, croup and other respiratory constrictions, aches and pains, they wore medicated flannels on their chests or plastered themselves with poultices. They wore little bags of asafetida around their necks--or perhaps we should say the children did. They brewed home remedies from roots and herbs, made a tea from the balmony plant, and for their deeper-seated ailments such as stiffness in the joints--rheumatism--they concocted a bitters from the roots of what was called locally the algerita bush--and we may add that from the berries of that same bush they made a delicious jelly. And just for the record may I add that as late as 1905 I grubbed the roots of the algerita for my great-grandmother's rheumatism!

Just to show that our typical family was not too far off base in what they did with the roots of the algerita, I would like to recount a conversation which I had with a gentleman some fifteen years or so ago. But before we get to that let us note that what we called algerita is more properly called agarita. Its scientific name is *Berberis trifoliata*; it is also known as agrito, wild currant or chaparral berry. (The word agrito means a "little sour." Our observation would be that that is a bit of an understatement--for the brew which my grandmother concocted from the roots of the algerita was bitter--bitter!) But to get on with the story. For years on end the roots of certain shrubs of the barberry family have been used to make tonics and febrifuges. And that is precisely what my visitor of about fifteen years ago was proposing to do--produce commercially a medicine from the roots of *Mahonia trifoliata*, which if I am not mistaken is nothing more or less than the shrub which we called algerita! To leave the impression that our family relied entirely on home remedies for illness, aches and pains would be entirely erroneous. They made occasional trips to the neighboring towns of Florence, Burnet or Lampasas and on such trips they supplied themselves with the more common drugs then available. But by and large they were on their own for years--and being on their own they improvised ways of making the most of it. They were a resourceful people--and let it redound to their everlasting credit that their descendants of three and four generations later are also a resourceful people.

Circumstances made it necessary for our family to be resourceful in many other ways. Until about the time the century turned he was a lucky youngster who wore new "store-boughten" clothes--save for the possible exception of shoes and a hat or cap. Clothes were "handed down" until they were literally worn-out--patches and all. Clothes for the smaller ones in the family were made by their mother as were most of the clothes which she herself wore. Shoes we half-soled until the tops would no longer hold a tack; work gloves and harness were treated with oil to make them more pliable and to last longer; and he was a poor farmer whose smokehouse went unsupplied for the winter months.

As mentioned previously, it is quite possible that our family were tenant farmers. This meant that a part of their crops went to the landlord as rent--every fourth bale of cotton and third bushel of corn. Other farm products were divided in varying proportions. Cotton was the main crop--the money crop.

THE FAMILY GETS THROUGH THE YEAR

It was the only farm product for which our family received cash--in any considerable amount at least. Without figures to back us up, our guess would be that our family produced on an average ten to twelve bales of cotton per year. Three-fourths of this they could keep if they were renters. If they sold at a favorable price of eight to ten cents per pound their annual cash income approximated \$325 to \$500. The family who owned their land fared proportionately better. But whether land-owner or renter, if the family was large enough--and the children old enough--they could keep most of their income--for the very simple reason that they did all of the work themselves! But wages were such that seasonal additional help did not pose an insurmountable problem. The rate of pay for plowing, planting and chopping probably averaged seventy-five cents a day--and come picking time the going rate was from forty to sixty cents per hundred pounds. The ginner also took his toll--which amounted to from sixty cents to one dollar per hundred pounds of lint cotton. For a long time cotton seed were a nuisance; but the day came when they had value and the farmer could "gin and leave"--that is, leave the seed with the ginner as part payment for ginning.

Our family also had another kind of income--or what amounted to money--the family garden, cows and chickens. We'll give the family garden a paragraph later. Right now let us say that our family seldom lacked for milk and butter. Pigs grew up and became bacon and sausage--or sowbelly; grease was used in the making of soap. Chickens, guineas and turkeys furnished eggs or found their way into the frying pan or oven. And what the family did not need for itself they bartered and traded with the peddler, or in later years took to town to trade with the local merchants.

One sure sign of a "good" farmer was the family garden--which was just about a yearlong business. The family simply had to eat--and one sure way to keep from going hungry was to supply their table themselves. This the family did from the garden. Planting was done methodically--seed for spring vegetables were planted early while those for summer and fall maturing were planted later. There is no point in attempting to name the vegetables which the family grew--whatever was edible and nourishing was planted. And knowing that there was always a winter ahead everything imaginable was canned or preserved in one form or another. Nor did the family limit its canning and preserving to products from the garden. A few fruit trees were usually planted around somewhere, and wild plums and mustang grapes grew in the woods and along the banks of the creeks. The fruits of these could be had for the gathering--and we may be sure that our family gathered what they needed for preserves and jellies. And if we may believe the tales which have come down to us, now and then grape wine was made--and probably in larger quantities than one would think.

Our family of course had to have supplies other than those they could grow in their gardens and fields. Until Mr. Stephen Taylor established the first general store in the community in the early 1880s the purchasing of such supplies meant an occasional trip to nearby towns. We are told too that it was a rather common practice for families to "pool their interests" in the making of such purchases. That is, some one would let it be known that he was going, say, to Georgetown on Thursday and--"If anybody wants something just

THE FAMILY GETS THROUGH THE YEAR

give me a list and the money." And being a descendant of one of the families who must have made many purchases in this manner (as a matter of fact my paternal grandfather made many such trips himself) I would be willing to wager that no family ever had reason to question the amount of change returned, or failed to make up the difference if the cost of supplies exceeded expectations.

So much for all of that. Now let's get on with the winter and spring plowing.

Once all of the crops were gathered the fall plowing began. With that out of the way the family had a few months of respite from work in the fields. But let the first sign of spring appear and they were at it again. The fields were plowed and re-plowed, and along in March cotton and corn were planted. Within another month or so came the "chopping" season when most of the young plants were chopped out with a hoe so that individual plants would have plenty of room to grow to maturity and fruition. Then followed the usual plowing until the crops were "laid by"--that is, cultivation was over. All that was needed now was good growing weather--for until the bollweevil made his appearance in the 1900s it was largely the weather which determined the yield of cotton in the fall.

Come the late summer and early fall months the family pitched in again to pick the cotton and gather the corn. If by chance they had planted several acres to oats the threshing crew came along too. But their principal interest was getting the cotton out and ginned--for a summer squall or an early fall hurricane could just about destroy a field of open cotton. With the cotton picked and ginned, the corn gathered and in the crib, the hay baled and the straw stacked, and the other miscellaneous odds and ends attended to, the year came full cycle--and our family was ready to start all over again.

We need now to look at some of the other activities of our family. Children of scholastic age started to school in November--after the cotton-picking season was over--but were out again in April--cotton-chopping time again. The average school year was five to five and a half months. Until the winter of 1882-83 such "schooling" as they received was from private or subscription schools. For the next ten or twelve years they attended school at old Gum Springs. Later they went to school at Taylor's Gin--now Briggs--or elsewhere as other schools came to be established nearby. Readers who are interested in something more about the first twenty-five years of public education in the Gum Springs community will find the story told in more detail in the First-Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School.

Many of the people with whom we have talked or corresponded in putting these notes together have referred repeatedly to the social activities in which our family found pleasure and diversion.

Well, the answer to the question of the social activities of our family is a simple one--they made their own. With their sole means of getting about limited to the horse and buggy--or wagon if the family was a large one--they were naturally circumscribed in their travels. Georgetown, Lampasas and Burnet

THE FAMILY GETS THROUGH THE YEAR

were a full day away and it was a rare occasion when anything but business took people that far from home. It is true that now and then a family would pack up and take off for places a hundred or two miles distant but such trips were few and far between. (The Langford family, for example, took off in a covered wagon in the fall of 1897 and spent the greater part of the winter near Coleman in a two-room cabin on Mr. Henry Campbell's place.)

What social activities then could we expect to find in the Gum Springs area sixty or eighty years ago?

First of all was the desire for some form of worship. For one of our family's first interests concerned their spiritual welfare. Being of Protestant faith and practice, they had much in common with all of the other families in the community even though there might be differences in their religious beliefs. Our most reliable information is that for years the people met in homes in the area or at the old Gum Springs schoolhouse for some form of worship. We are also told that the circuit rider went that way occasionally, and that it was not an uncommon practice for one of the elder and more persuasive citizens of the community "to bring the message" at one of these Sunday gatherings. Following the erection of the Prairie View Methodist church building in 1892--and the organization of other church groups in later years--our family at long last found a church home of its own.

While the many and various ways in which our family found amusement, recreation and diversion are pretty well described in many places in the text, we may sum them all up here by saying that there were community picnics, singsongs, Christmas trees, parties, quilting bees, the Saturday afternoon trip to town, the literary and debating society, the spelling match at the school, square dancing, the charivari--except that our family called it a "shivaree"--and so on and on. The two big occasions of the year were the Christmas tree and the Fourth-of-July picnic. The first was one in which the Yuletide spirit prevailed; the second, one in which the voice of the spellbinder was heard in the land. And when election year rolled around the politician had a field day. For let it be recorded once and for all that the menfolk--this was long before the adoption of the 19th amendment to the Constitution--took their politics seriously. They voted a stright democratic ticket--and the politician who would win their votes had first to win their confidence!

The story of how our family made it through the year could go on indefinitely. However, two other possible events should be mentioned before we leave them. First, it is not at all unlikely that a new baby was born that year--especially so if the family was young and the children small. Second, if the family was an older one and the children grown, it is very probable that a son or a daughter married into another family on the next farm or into a family not too far removed. Whether these events happened this year or next--they happened. For scores of families in the Briggs community of today--and hundreds of families of other communities, cities, towns and states--can trace their lineage back through four and five generations to families who made it, say, through the year 1875, or 1890--or whatever year they may wish to choose. And if I may be

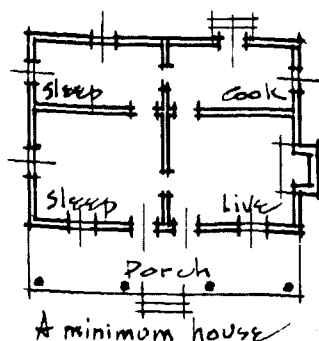
THE FAMILY GETS THROUGH THE YEAR

permitted a very personal note it would be to observe that my grandson is of the sixth generation of one of those families.

Finally, not every family made it through the year without death striking in their midst. It might be from accident, typhoid fever, storm, or the general debility of old age. But whatever the cause, there came the inevitable hour of sorrow and the need of friends. The whole story of care and solicitude in such times can best be illustrated by relating what Ernest Taylor said to me one day several years ago. Mr. Taylor has lived in Briggs all of his life. Now getting on into his seventies, he made this observation while we were standing in the Mount Moriah cemetery: "I have attended practically every funeral which has been in Briggs during the last sixty years. I have sat up with the sick, have served as pallbearer, have helped dig graves; and wherever possible have done my best to comfort those in need of help." One could write a book and say less.

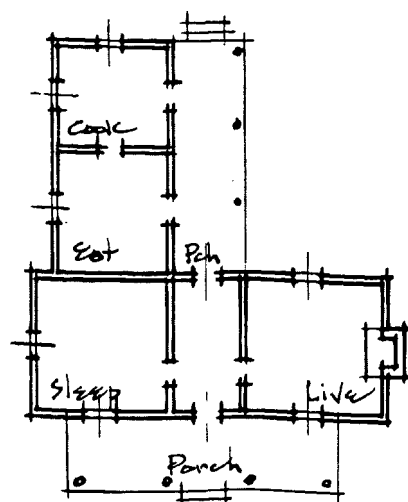
THE TYPICAL HOUSE: CIRCA 1890

Shown immediately below is what approximated the minimum house of the Gum Springs area. Enclosed space was probably 700 sq. ft. or less. As the family increased one end of the porch was enclosed and on occasion could sleep four or five children - that is, if they slept "crosswise." Practically every such house had a chimney as shown here.



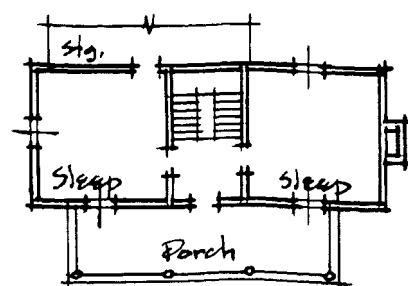
A minimum house

Our typical house plan is shown in the middle sketch. Its enclosed area was about 850 sq. ft. A curious fact was that in many of these houses entrance to the dining-kitchen area was via the rear porch. But that apparently was of little concern. What this house looked like in elevation is shown in the photographs of the Edgar and Langford homes.



Our typical house

If additional space was needed in our typical house, the solution was simply the adding of a second story across the front - see bottom sketch. When this was done the bedroom on the first floor became the "parlor" - a room set aside to be opened only on special occasions - say when "company" came, parties, weddings. What this expanded house looked like is shown in the photograph of the DeWolf house - a house which was built that way in the beginning.



Second floor plan

It was not uncommon for our typical home of 900 sq. ft. to be "home" to a family consisting of parents and six, eight or ten children. Sixty and seventy years later one wonders how they got along. The answer is - they did! The house was simple in plan - its occupants' way of life was simple too. But even so, our typical house was a place of gracious living.

A few of the two-room "dog run" log cabins were built in the neighborhood of Gum Springs but they have long since disappeared from the face of the earth.

THE TYPICAL HOUSE: CIRCA 1890

The typical house of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs in, say, 1890 was of "box-and-batten" construction. Essentially this consisted of a frame formed with 2x4's, the whole "boxed in" with 1x12's and the joints covered with battens. The result was that walls and partitions were about one inch in thickness--which with imperfections in framing and warping in aging left many a crack through which the chilly blasts of winter winds put many a youngster between the blankets.

In contrast with box-and-batten construction there was the "studwall" system of framing. This consisted of a frame of 2x4's about 24" on centers, plates and sills. Weatherboarding or siding was placed horizontally on the exterior, but all interior wall surfaces and ceilings were as likely as not finished with centermatched and beaded material. The result was a wall about five inches in thickness with an airspace between exterior and interior surfaces--all of which resulted in not only a much stronger wall but one which afforded a greater degree of protection against heat and cold.

By and large the people--whether their homes were of one type of construction or the other--made every effort to make them thoroughly livable. More often than not they simply painted the interiors in light neutral tones. Occasionally some used wallpaper. But whether painted or papered, draperies or curtains were always hung at the windows. Fruit trees, rose bushes, shrubs of one kind or another, were invariably planted--and what was known as the "front yard" was swept clean with a broom every morning!

Bathing was done in the kitchen--in the family wash tub and on Saturday afternoon or evening. Water supply was either an underground "cistern" into which rainwater was conducted from the roof by gutters and downspouts, or simply a drilled or dug well. Toilet facilities consisted solely of the outhouse, which most of the people had the good sense to place downhill, "back of the barn," or conceal by planting.

To describe the typical house of the 1890s or 1900s would be pointless without a word about the living that went on within it. To help out in that we have reproduced as Plate 3 the floor plan of practically any house of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs area for, say, the last decade of the nineteenth or the first decade of the twentieth century. To be sure, there were homes less pretentious than the one whose plan we are reproducing. Likewise, there were more pretentious ones. What we are trying to show is what approximated the "typical" home at about the time the century turned--a house whose "enclosed" space was probably 900 square feet. To show what such a house looked like from the outside we are reproducing a photograph of the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Edgar from a photograph made available by their daughter Mrs. G. O. Lowe of Burnet.

The Edgar home was of the "box-and-batten" construction described above --as is evidenced clearly in the photograph. One also notes the "gingerbread" ornament and the turned columns on the front porch. And of course the picket fence which enclosed a front yard probably ten feet in depth and which Mrs. Edgar swept with a broom every morning--as often as not before she had washed the breakfast dishes!

THE TYPICAL HOUSE: CIRCA 1890

But to get on with the "living" in our typical house of sixty and eighty years ago.

One enters of course through a hall in which there were four openings: the front door, a rear door leading to a rear porch, and two doors leading to the rooms at either side. Furniture in the hall was usually kept to a minimum: a chair or two, some kind of a sofa and possibly a small table, an occasional whatnot, a picture or two, or a motto in appropriate frame.

The room at the left--or at the right if the house faced in another direction--was the living room, the "family" room--for literally it was here that the family lived. Its furniture consisted generally of a double bed, chairs, a table or two, possibly a sewing machine, some kind of a cabinet or desk-like piece in which records were always kept, a wardrobe for clothes, possibly a trundle bed which during the day was rolled under the double bed, while over the mantelpiece if the house was that pretentious hung a large photograph of the grandparents from one or the other side of the family.

The other room off the hall served a dual purpose in the smaller families--that of parlor and bed room. But since there were few small families in the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs area sixty or eighty years ago, the room simply became another bed room furnished with two double beds, the usual chairs, a wardrobe, a washstand on which was placed a china bowl and pitcher and beside which stood a slop basin, while within the storage portion of the washstand was placed the "chamber"--a most convenient utensil for use at night or in the case of illness in the family.

The first room in the ell going off to the rear was usually the dining room. Its furniture consisted generally of a dining table and chairs, a sideboard for cutlery, linens and dishes, and in the case of the larger families there was a kind of folding bed for use at night.

The next room back was the kitchen in which was a wood-burning stove, a wood-box, a safe, a coffee grinder, and small table or two.

The porches served their purposes too. The front one was used primarily for "rocking"--that is, except in inclement weather. The rear one served in good weather as a place for churning, ironing--and visiting. In the winter months wood for the fireplace and stove was piled there. And always--except in the dead of winter--all washing of hands and faces was done there--in a galvanized washpan on a wood shelf placed between two of the porch columns. And always too--even in the dead of winter!--a bucket with dipper was suspended from the beam over the wash-shelf.

For years on end our typical house had no screens at its doors and windows--which meant of course that its occupants had to protect themselves at night from mosquitos with a kind of fabric called a "mosquito bar" suspended over their beds--or as often or not by a smudge-pot placed to windward. The same kind of material was used in the daytime to protect foods, milk and butter from flies. And to keep flies away from the dining table during meals some

THE TYPICAL HOUSE: CIRCA 1890

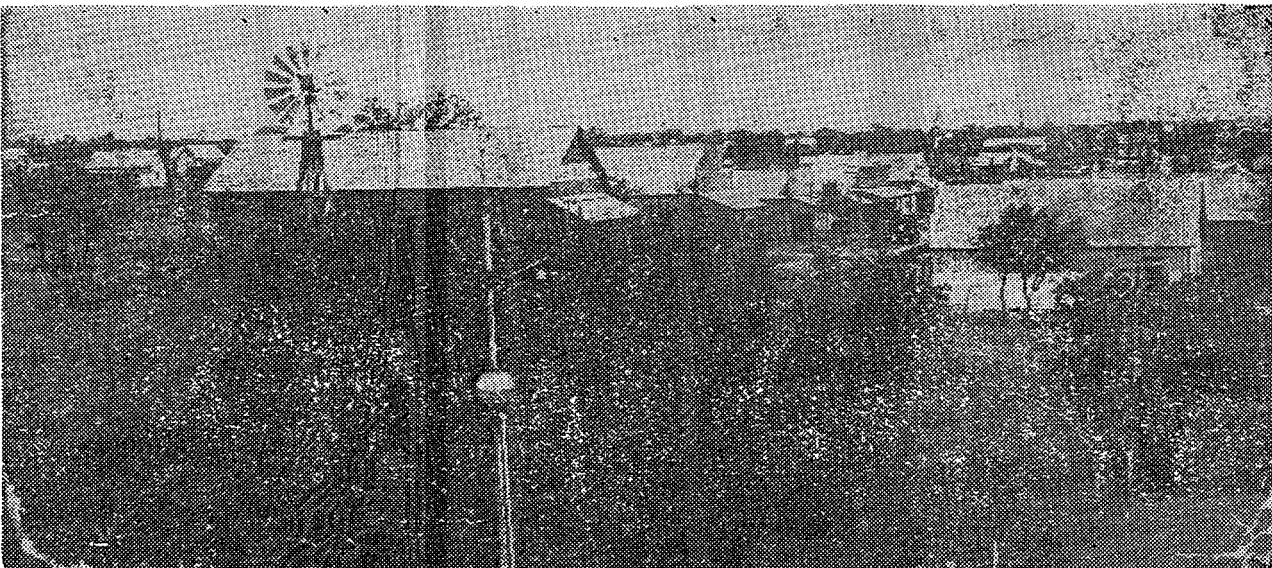
of the more "inventive" ones improvised a kind of fan by cutting paper into strips which they fastened to slender poles or reeds suspended from the ceiling. By attaching a string to the framework one could operate the mechanism and eat at the same time. Or in the case of company one of the youngsters would operate the thing while his elders ate. Children always ate at the second table; and if the company stayed overnight the kids often found themselves sleeping at the foot of the bed!

Modern conveniences which we accept as commonplace today were of course missing from our typical house. Lighting was by kerosene lamps; the fireplace and a wood-burning stove furnished heat in the winter; and if one wanted respite from the heat of summer he created his own breeze with a palmetto fan or simply sought the shade of the china berry tree. But for more formal or "dress-up" occasions milady used a different kind of fan--an instrument made of highly decorative papers and silks mounted on sticks which turned about a common pivot to open out into a sector of a circle.

Well, all of that is a far cry from floor furnaces and central heating, from window units and air-conditioning, from metal windows and screens, walls of glass and indirect lighting; from jet airliners, TV, intercity telephone dialing, and man-made earth-girdling satellites. Take it from one who remembers--it is! But by and large the family which lived in our typical house lived a full and rich life. Knowing nothing of these latter-day things, they never missed them. Circumscribed as they were--shall we say in both time and space--they earned their daily bread--and for the most part enjoyed it. Save for an occasional "radical" scattered here and there among them, as previously noted the people who founded and lived in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs had an abiding faith in the Almighty, were protestant in their belief and reared their children accordingly. They also had an abiding faith in the good inherent in every man--and granted to everyone the right to go his own way so long as he acquitted himself with a reasonable degree of circumspection. They were solicitous of their neighbor's welfare, often letting their own affairs go unattended when their fellowman was in distress. They enjoyed each other's company, made their own fun as they went along--and a man's word was his bond. We could use more of their kind today!

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

This and the photograph used as a frontispiece show the main business section of Briggs at about the turn of the century. A few residences are shown in the background. The picture below was made from the roof of the W. A. Nichols home about 1905.

LOOKING NORTH ALONG MAIN STREET: ABOUT 1905

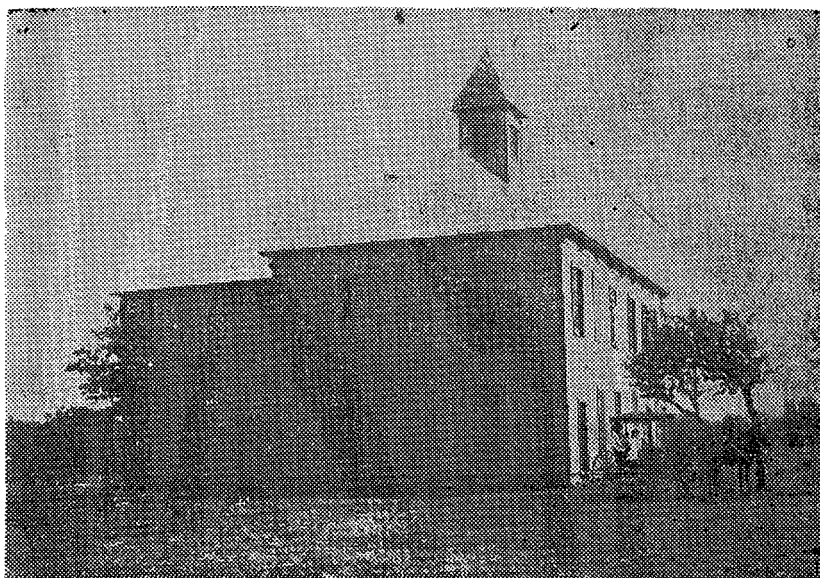
Business buildings along the left include the general stores of W. T. Jennings and J. W. Edgar, the blacksmith shop of A. W. Horn and R. A. Patterson, Gude's restaurant, J. H. Lewis grocery and barbershop, J. T. Hall store and post office. Residences: J. T. Hall and Andrew Moore, left of windmill; Lee Landrum, far background; J. T. Harton, with chimney; J. W. Jordan, beyond Harton home; J. H. Joyce, right background. Note lightning rod and vane top of W. A. Nichols home. Use of plate for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.

TWO EARLY BUILDINGS

Dr. W. R. Hazlewood erected the first drugstore in Briggs in the late 1890s. The school building shown here was the second one to be erected in Briggs. The first--the one destroyed by the tornado in April 1906--was quite similar to this one.



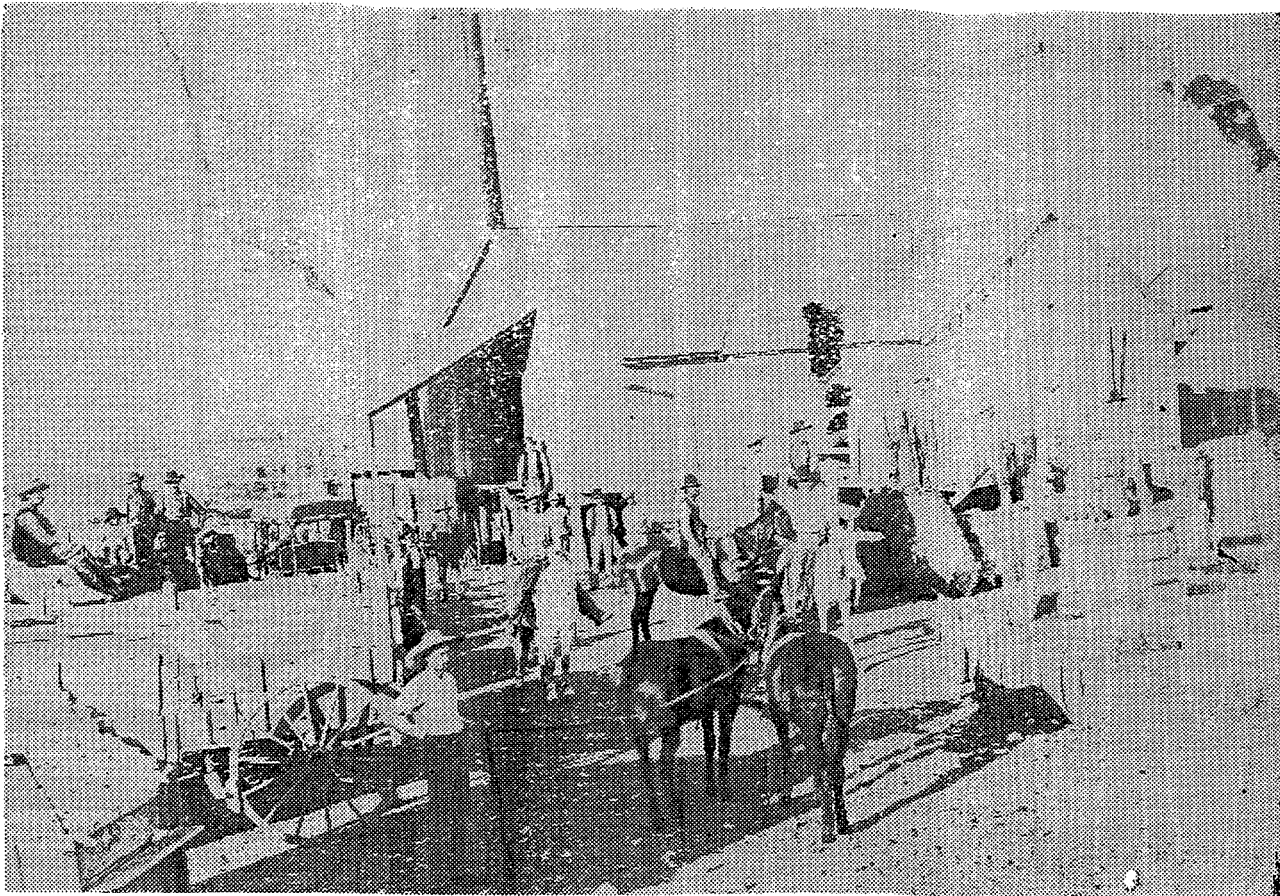
BRIGGS' FIRST DRUGSTORE. Owned by W. R. Hazlewood. Left to right: Marvin West, Marshall Haney, Dr. Hazlewood, Amos Patterson, Charlie West.



SECOND SCHOOLHOUSE: Erected in 1906-07 to replace the old one demolished in the tornado of 1906. Use of plates for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.

THE COTTON GIN (1)

The first cotton gin in the Gum Springs community was erected by Mr. Stephen Taylor in the early 1880s. That gin was later sold to Mr. G. E. West, moved and rebuilt about one hundred fifty yards south of the Gum Springs schoolhouse. This is photograph of what was known as the "first" West gin.

**FIRST WEST GIN: ABOUT 1885**

A typical gin yard scene in the 1880s. Identified in the picture are: Mr. West, on steps at left; J. T. Harton, on white horse; J. M. Carpenter on bay; Smith Lockhart, holding reins in foreground; Lynn Tubbs, Arrie West, Walter Fewell, Jess Washburn, and others. Use of plate for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.

THE COTTON GIN (2)

Prior to the improvements installed in the gin shown below cotton was unloaded in baskets and dumped in the stands by hand. Innovations incorporated in the remodeling job included unloading by "suction" and a "screw" press.



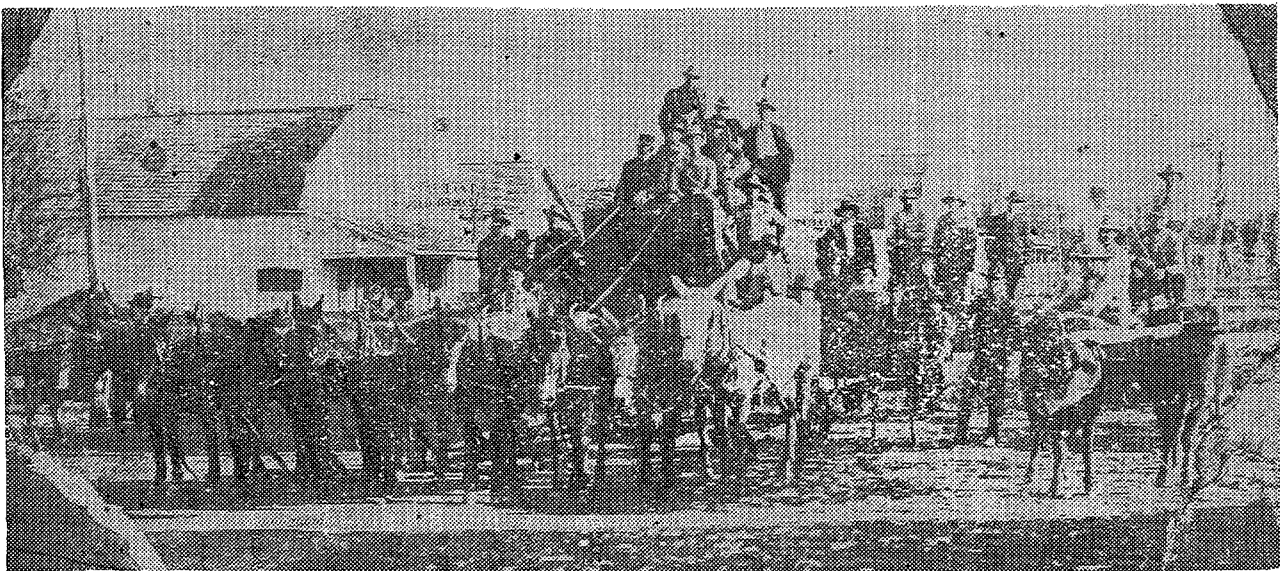
REMODELED WEST GIN: ABOUT 1895

Boiler and engine room are at left, stand section in center, press section at right. Headwaters of Berry Creek about a mile or so to the northwest. Gum Springs schoolhouse about one hundred fifty yards to the left.

Use of plate for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.

THE COTTON GIN (3)

Actually a street scene in Briggs but we are relating the picture to the cotton gin--for reasons which will be obvious by reading the caption under the picture.



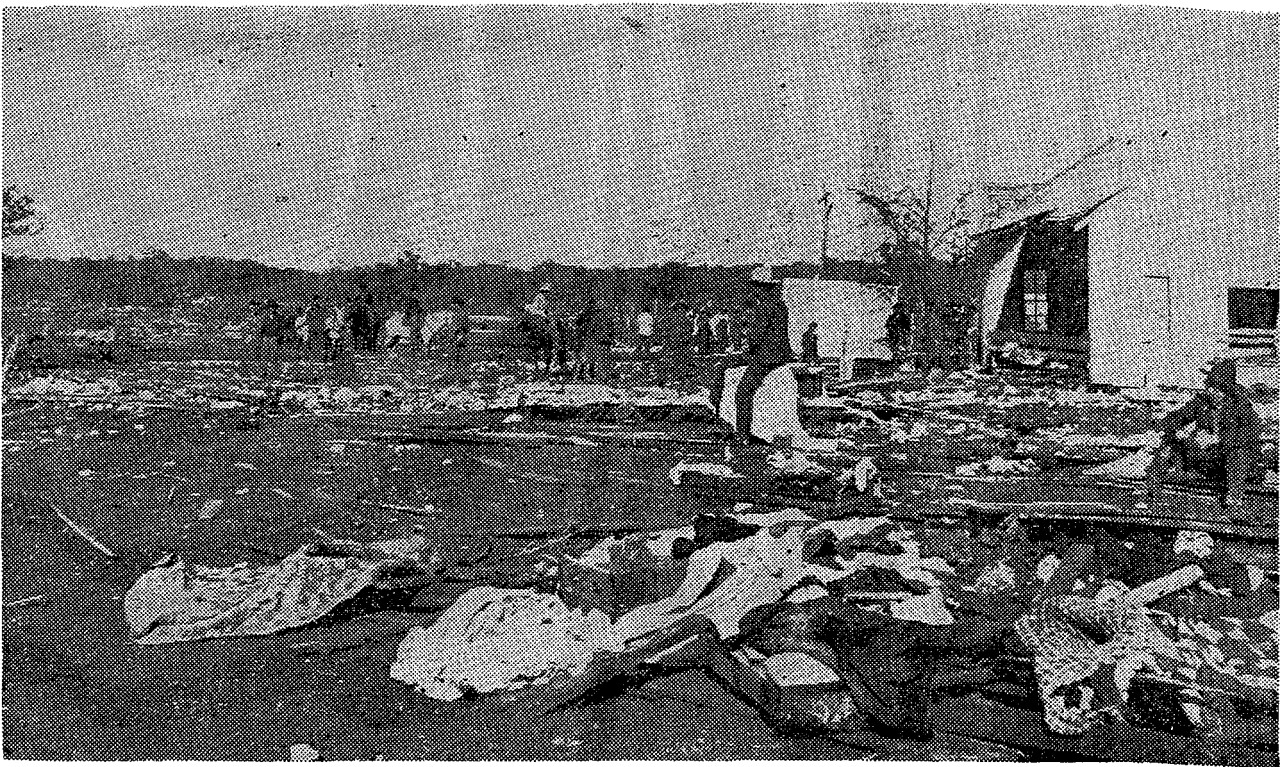
VIEW ALONG MAIN STREET IN BRIGGS: ABOUT 1908

This picture shows a boiler being moved from the West gin to Briggs; bought by John and Lloyd Ellason to be used in the Ellason gin. Shown in picture are John Ellason and his team of oxen; Lloyd Ellason, Sid Jordan, J. W. Jordan, Homer Jordan, Jim Preslar, A. W. Horn, J. T. Harton, Jim Harton, Edwin Harton, (age 3); J. M. West with two teams, right; W. M. Hall driving team at left; Charlie West, Hill DeWolf, John Moore on crutches, Doyle Moore.

Use of plate for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.

TORNADO OF 1906 (1)

Briggs was struck by a destructive tornado in the afternoon of April 12, 1906. Fifteen or twenty residences and business buildings and the schoolhouse were destroyed; many others were damaged. Several people were injured.



DESTRUCTION WROUGHT BY TORNADO

This picture was made the next day. In immediate foreground is shown the wreckage from the Ireland Joseph home. Building at the right is the Hall general store. The schoolhouse stood in the open area at left and rear of the picture.

Use of plate for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.

TORNADO OF 1906 (2)

The tornado struck from the southwest about 4:00 p. m. or a few minutes before. It swept northeastwardly through Briggs, leaving wrack and ruin in its path. Its fury finally dissipated after having cut a swath a hundred yards wide five miles long through the countryside.

DESTRUCTION WROUGHT BY TORNADO

View showing wreckage of schoolhouse and barn of Dr. J. F. Taylor at left. Center of path of tornado was diagonally across this picture from upper right to lower left. Business area of Briggs in background. Use of plate for reproduction courtesy of N. Oliver Cox.



H. DEWOLF HOME. Spring of 1906. Note double columns and highly decorative brackets



S. R. SKAGGS HOME. Erected about 1903. Restrained use of decorative ornament.

THE HOMER DEWOLF HOME

In many respects the DeWolf home was one of the more commodious houses erected in the Gum Springs community in the 1880s. Its floor plan is typical of the larger homes of the period: one room deep, two stories along the front with a one-story ell in the left rear, galleries and wide halls both upstairs and down. Its architecture was surprisingly good for that part of Central Texas. One does note, however, a degree of restraint in the use of "gingerbread" ornament--save for the ubiquitous bracket, a gimcrack manufactured literally by the thousands even until well into the twentieth century. Heating was by open fireplaces on both floors--note the large masonry chimneys at each end of the building--and a wood-burning stove in the ell at the rear. Mrs. W. H. Kirk (nee Rose DeWolf) wrote shortly before her death on May 31, 1959, this about the DeWolf home:

Soon thereafter--about 1887--father built what was for those days a rather pretentious house--probably the first in the community with plastered walls and ceilings. We called it "Mill Creek" after a small stream by that name which ran across the north part of the ranch. It was a two-story, L-shaped structure with wide halls and galleries upstairs and down... Set at the very brow of a low rise of ground, the house made an imposing and pleasing appearance. Most unfortunately, it was destroyed by fire about 1910.

The photograph of the DeWolf home on Plate 11 was made available through the courtesy of Mrs. George W. Powell (nee Mima DeWolf) of Goldthwaite. Mrs. Powell says that the picture was taken in the summer of 1906 following the storm "as can be noted from the uprooted tree in the foreground"--and adds: "it was a good plastered house; I wish it was standing today."

DeWolf children identified in the photograph are Floy (Mrs. John Blamer), sitting on porch; Mima (Mrs. George W. Powell), sitting on steps; Hardy, standing in yard. The youngster is Glen West, son of Arrie and Bessie DeWolf West.

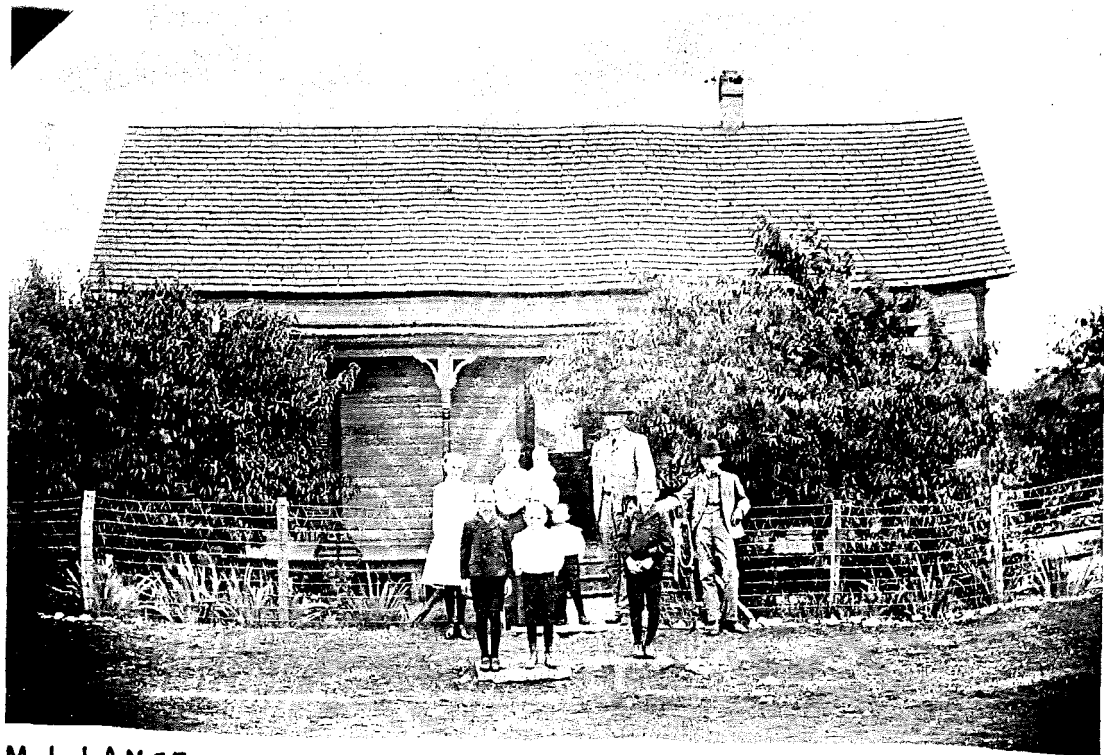
THE M. L. LANGFORD HOME

Two reasons prompt us to include this home in the story of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs. In the first place, it is quite typical of the more modest homes of the area; and in the second, we want to say a word or two about the fruit trees in the front and side yards.

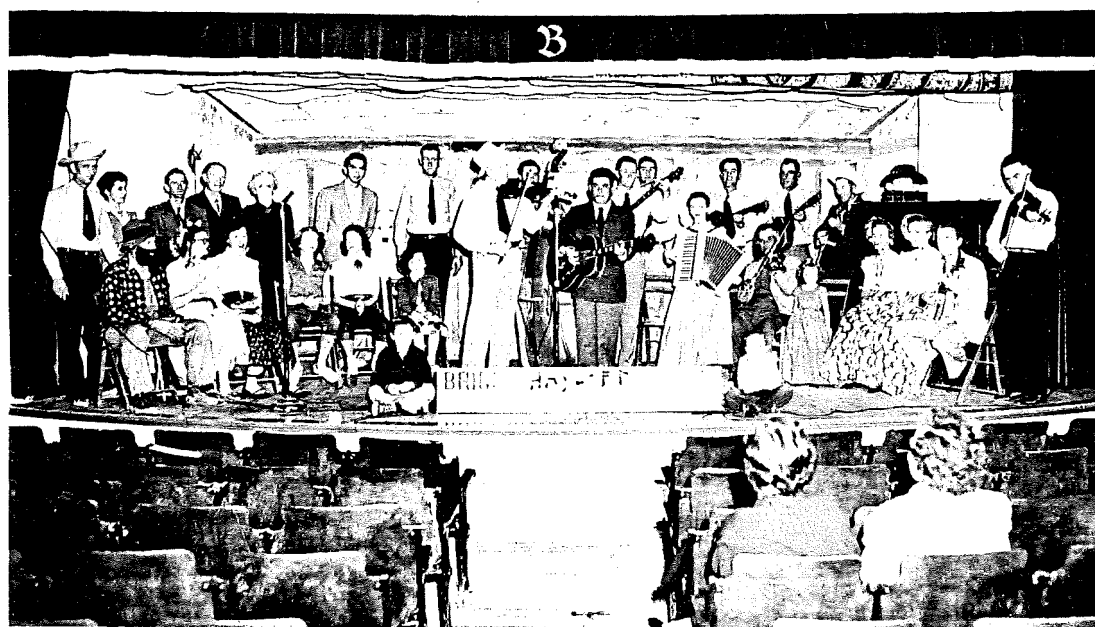
This home was built and occupied in the spring of 1901. The tornado of 1906 skidded it around in the yard; it was destroyed by fire some forty years later. As was the case in practically all of the homes of the time, this one was one room deep with an ell of two rooms going off to the left rear. Thus the plan included four rooms, a central hall, and front and rear porches. And as noted in the DeWolf home, that gimcrack, the bracket, is used here--this time painted



J.W. EDGAR HOME. About 1900. Note effective use of ornament and turned columns on porch.



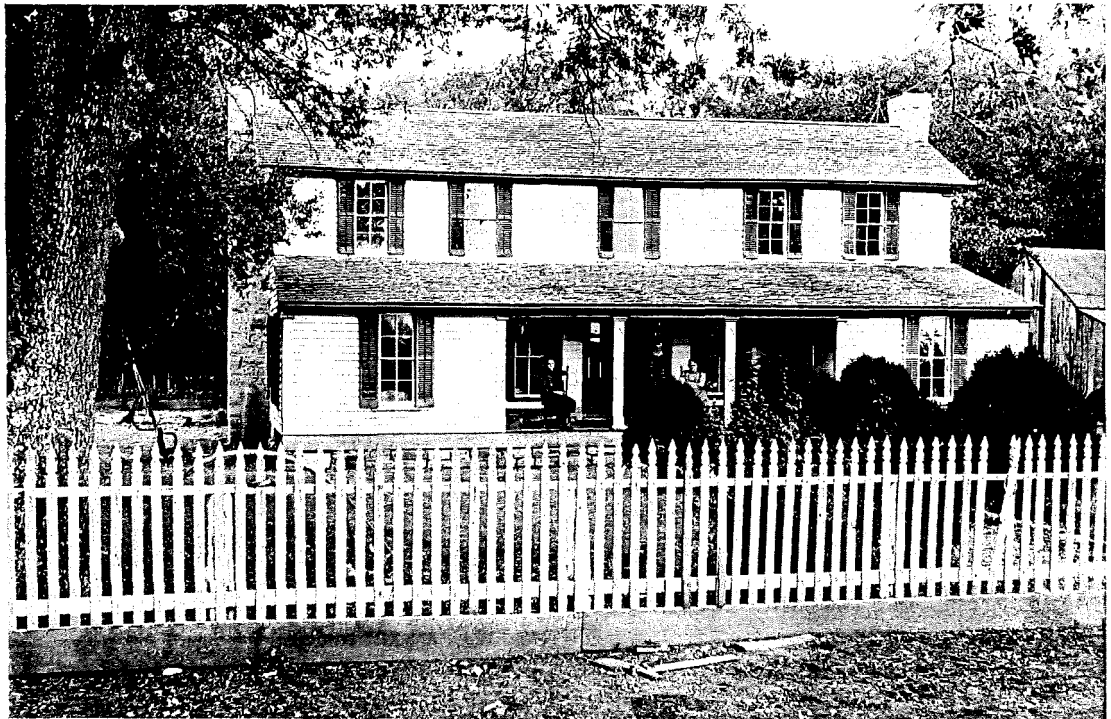
M.L. LANGFORD HOME. Spring of 1905. Only decorative features are turned columns and brackets.



BRIGGS HAYLOFT JAMBOREE GANG. Christmas 1952.
Still a popular organization in Briggs



SINGING SCHOOL. About 1902. Such schools were
popular when the century turned



T. H. REAVIS HOME. Erected near the site of old Gum Springs in 1884. Still in use and in family name.



INTERMEDIATE GRADE: 1921
Mrs. Stella Skaggs, teacher. Identification of pupils later under "Holiday Greetings." Page 72

THE M. L. LANGFORD HOME

a bright yellow! The turned column again makes one of its appearances in the community, its many divisions painted in the brighter colors of the spectrum.

Now a word about the fruit trees. Save for sugar, flour, pepper and salt, and a few luxuries, every family in the Gum Springs area at the turn of the century was practically self-supporting so far as the necessities of life were concerned. Every home had its family garden, a cow or two or three, one or several hogs, chickens--and two to a dozen fruit trees. Where the Langford family had possibly a dozen peach and plum trees, the DeWolf family had acres--and within these limits fruit trees were planted throughout the community which was first called Gum Springs, later Taylor's Gin, and finally Briggs. And it was from the fruits of these trees that hundreds of jars of peaches, plums, jellies and jams were preserved for winter use.

Identified in the picture are, left to right: Clyde (1896--1950), Oran (1898--1924), Ivan (1894--), all standing in front; in back row, Alda (1893--1954), mother (Maud Clarence Fewell, 1873--1939) holding in arms William Harper (1904--), Elton (1900--), father (Marcus Lafayette Langford, 1870--1939), Ernest (1891--). Photograph made in the spring of 1905 by W. G. Ireland, "Traveling Artist."

THE S. R. SKAGGS HOME

Built in the early 1900s, this was one of the later more substantial homes of the community. Located hard by Mill Creek, it still stands about three miles northeast of Briggs. As can be observed from the elevation, the floor plan departs materially from, say, the plan of the DeWolf home--which as we have noted consisted of a two-story unit across the front with a one-story dining-kitchen unit going off to the rear. The home was built by M. L. Langford who worked practically alone on its construction.

This house is typical of the era which produced 12-foot ceilings and large rooms. Of frame construction throughout, exterior wall surfaces were of "weatherboarding"--a common term for beveled or molded siding. It was about this time that "shiplap, canvas and paper" were introduced in the community. This method of construction and decoration consisted of finishing the interior wall surfaces with "shiplap"--usually 1 x 8s with lapped edges--covering them with canvas held to the walls by tacks, and finishing with wallpaper pasted to the canvas.

This anecdote properly belongs elsewhere but since it relates to the construction of this home we'll include it here. Sometime prior to its erection, Mr. J. M. (Jim) Carpenter and Mr. Langford had formed a partnership as contractors and builders. They were engaged in building a home for the G. E. West family when they had a falling out. As the late Marvin West related their "spat" to

THE S. R. SKAGGS HOME

me at the 1955 homecoming, they worked side by side for days without speaking. If one needed help in carrying a 2 x 12 or setting a stud in place, he simply motioned to the other and by gestures indicated what his need was. Mr. West put up with this foolishness as long as he could. Finally he called them together and said he had had enough. Pointing to Mr. Langford, he said, "Mark, you are the youngest--you're fired. Rem Skaggs wants to build a home. Go talk to him." And with that the Carpenter-Langford partnership was dissolved! Mr. Carpenter finished the West home and within a few days Mr. Langford began work on the Skaggs home--all of the carpenter work of which he did by himself. The foundation and chimneys were the work of a Negro mason, "Uncle" Ad Rose, from near Bertram; painting and papering by J. J. (Jim) Rhodes.

THE J. W. EDGAR HOME

The J. W. Edgar home, top of Plate 12, is typical of what has been called "box and batten" construction--that is, the walls were framed of 1 x 12's, the joints covered with 1 x 4 battens. Typical of the period too is the gingerbread ornament of the front porch. The blocks under the roof overhang, the scallops along the bottom of the element between the columns, the brackets at the top of the columns, and in deed the columns themselves--all of this is typical of a period of gracious living and good taste. And of course the picket fence guaranteed a degree of privacy to the people living behind it. Reference is made elsewhere to the use of various colors in painting the brackets and columns. That is particularly evident here. The probability is that the color of the brackets is yellow; the configurations of the columns are probably yellow, red, blue, with a touch of green. The plan of the house is that shown in the middle of Plate 3. The house was erected about 1897, razed some forty years later.

Identified in the photograph are Mr. and Mrs. Edgar, their daughter Mae and son Morris. The photograph was made about 1903.

THE T. H. REAVIS HOME

The T. H. Reavis home, top of Plate 14, is the oldest home still standing in the proximity of old Gum Springs. It was erected in 1884; its builder was J. B. Montgomery. Mrs. Rose McGuire Kinser of Florence says of it: "So far as I know, it is the only house remaining of the early days. It has never been remodeled and remains in the Reavis family to this day." She adds further: "There were seven to eight beds to be furnished with linen and quilts... There

THE T. H. REAVIS HOME

was a long table in the dining room where from ten to twelve people could be seated at one time... At Christmas time the table would almost groan under its load of food... The family had lots of company."

The house is of wood frame construction and included eight principal rooms and central halls on first and second floors. The main body of the house is two stories in height; one-story units are along the front and rear. The family living and bedroom is at the left down stairs, the parlor at the right across the hall. The kitchen is at the rear of the family room, the dining room at the rear of the parlor. Two bedrooms of the same size as the family room and the parlor are on the second floor; two smaller bedrooms are along the front at either side of the open porch.

The term "gracious living" has been used a number of times in describing the homes of the early settlers in the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs community. Nowhere could the term be more aptly applied than in a description of the T. H. Reavis home--as is abundantly borne out in the biography of the Reavis family later.

BRIGGS SETTLES DOWN

Like most all other unincorporated towns and villages in the state of Texas, Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs has never been confined to artificial boundaries called city limits. It has therefore been free to move about--and this it has done at least twice within the past three quarters of a century. There are few people left whose memories run back that far; but of those with whom we have been privileged to talk, all are in agreement that the first attempt to effect a real community of homes was made around old Gum Springs. All are in agreement also that but the barest traces of the early homes remain--possibly part of a foundation here, the rubble of a fallen chimney there. There is also a part of another house standing about halfway between present-day Briggs and the original site of Gum Springs. We have been unable to learn who built it and when, and for our purposes it makes very little difference. What is left is the central portion of the original house. It is used today as a sort of granary and stands on the west side of the highway about one mile south of Briggs.

There may be records somewhere which will fix definitely the date of the first move from Gum Springs. If they were a matter of concern we would try to search them out. For our purpose it is unimportant--we are interested in times and people. So we'll just say that the first move was made in the 1880s when Mr. Stephen Taylor, Sr., built a store about one and one half miles to the north. Then a year or two later Mr. A. W. Horn built a blacksmith shop adjacent to the store. And on March 27, 1888, a post office was authorized and the community became Taylor's Gin. The store was later sold to Mr. J. W. Edgar and for several years Mr. Edgar and Mr. Horn owned the only two businesses in Taylor's Gin.

Another move was made in the 1890s--probably in the later part of the decade when Mr. Edgar and Mr. Horn erected new buildings about a quarter of a mile farther to the north. It was around these two buildings that Briggs later developed--but it was not until June 21, 1898, that the community became known as Briggs. What the business area looked like at what approaches its greatest period of development is shown in the photograph which is used as a frontispiece to these annals.

And so Briggs at last found its permanent home a full forty or fifty years after the first settlers arrived in the community. The town enjoyed its full measure of prosperity during the first three decades of the twentieth century--and in doing so contributed its fair share of young people who later made their marks in the fields of education, medicine, and other professions.

* * *

Since this was written the highway has been rerouted so that Briggs is bypassed entirely. So the town may be on the move again--at least the business area anyhow.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE IN 1900

The whole purpose of this volume is to capture so far as possible something of the times and peoples of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs during the past seventy or eighty years. My memory goes back at least sixty-five years; and I would say that the one event which I can remember most clearly is the annual Christmas tree--probably the tree of Christmas Eve 1899. I fix upon that year because 1899 was the first full year we lived in the first home my parents built in Briggs--a house within a stone's throw of the Baptist church.

The people of Briggs celebrated Christmas sixty years ago! There were displays of fireworks--firecrackers, Roman candles, skyrocket--shooting of anvils. Buggies--and wagons too for that matter--were pulled out of their usual shelters--surreptitiously of course--their wheels changed around or removed and hidden--in short, the devil had his way in mischief-making! But not until after the Christmas tree. That came first--and in this manner.

All of the Christmas trees in Briggs of which I have any recollection--that would be until 1906--were in the Baptist church. I doubt if there was ever a single "committee" appointed--the whole thing was spontaneous. Somebody simply said "We'll get the tree"--and that was that. The "we" might be Mr. Dillingham, Mr. Clinkscales, Mr. Horn--it mattered not. Once the promise was made we knew the tree would be found--a cedar tree just exactly tall enough to reach the ceiling of the church. And we also knew it would be in place, anchored, ready for decorating several days before Christmas eve.

Decorating the tree was something else--also spontaneous, the work of everybody in the community--man, woman, child. That was long before the REA came to Briggs--which meant that our only source of light was the oil lamp and the candle. But even so, scores of candles can give a lot of light when placed around a Christmas tree--"around" meaning all over the tree. They were of all colors and placed at the most advantageous points for audience viewing--and in strategic points so far as fire hazards were concerned. Other items of decoration were strings of popcorn, all manners of looped rings, figures, ladders, cut from colored papers--and of course the presents themselves. Every youngster in the community got a bag containing colored candy, an apple or other fruit, nuts--all as likely as not donated by the local merchants. These bags were made of a light woven fabric which made it possible for their contents to add color to the tree. Presents too were wrapped in all of the colors imaginable and placed in such a way that there was no question about their being seen--the smaller ones in the tree, the larger ones on the floor under it.

And so at long last--so it seemed to us kids--the tree was decorated. Then came the afternoon of Christmas Eve when our parents took us to the church for a sort of preview of what was to come that evening, or for a last rehearsal of our parts on the program which preceded the arrival of Santa Claus. For every Christmas tree was preceded by a program of some kind--generally singing of carols, sometimes by a quartet, sometimes by the congregation, sometimes by the youngsters. And occasionally a recitation or two, a short Christmas message--all it seemed to us kids to be sort of delaying action against the arrival of Santa Claus.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE IN 1900

But the bearded old gentleman finally arrived. There would be a terrific scrambling and scraping at the church door, the jingling of bells, a loud voice calling to the reindeers to halt, more clanging of bells as the dear old Saint made his entrance into the church. With greetings of Merry Christmas called to everybody in general and "Have you been a good little boy or girl?" to this boy or that girl as he made his way towards the tree, Santa was clothed in a red suit with a belt of sleigh bells, a long white beard, and a vast expanse of waistband formed by feather pillows or light cotton materials.

Once Santa had succeeded in achieving a reasonable of degree of quietude, he began to talk about the number of other places "I have to visit tonight" and wound up by saying that he had never seen so many presents and that he simply had to have help in distributing them. With that he would call out the names of eight or ten of us youngsters to distribute the gifts as he took them from the tree and called out the names on them. This would go on for about five minutes when he would say, "I'll just declare, I never saw so many presents. I believe I need help to get them off the tree." With that he would call out the names of a few grownups, place himself immediately in front of the tree, and direct that the older ones remove the gifts from the tree and bring them to him where he would call out the names and hand the gifts to us who were running up and down the aisles hunting out the "giftees."

At so the gifts were distributed. But just to be sure that no one was overlooked Santa would call out "Have I missed anyone?" If by chance some youngster held up his hand Santa would get his name and say to one of the grownups who had been removing the gifts from the tree, "John, (or Mabel) look real hard back there; I know I brought a gift for this lad." And sure enough, John or Mabel would find a gift for the lad--for a box of unmarked packages was provided for that purpose! It might be a bag of fruit and nuts, a stick of barberpole candy, a package of firecrackers--but at the appropriate time one was always found, and with the right name on it!

Many good men played Santa Claus in those days, but the one I remember with fondest recollections was the inimitable Jim (James J.) Rhodes. I have long since forgotten where he came from, but I remember the day he appeared at our home to spend the night--and stayed ten years! As long as I knew Jim Rhodes I never heard him speak an unkind word about a human being. Come to think of it, the only time I ever heard him speak of the devil was in some reference he made to the one he slept with at night. And the more I think about that remark, the more I wonder--for I slept in the same bed with him for years! Yes, Christmas in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs when the century turned was great doings!

--E.L.

THE SINGING SCHOOL

Reference is made elsewhere in two or three instances to the old-time singing school. These "schools" were popular about the turn of the century and for a few years thereafter. They were just one of the ways in which the people found amusement--and, incidentally, a bit of training. They were also called "Vocal Classes" as evidenced by the photograph which is shown at the bottom of Plate 13. Their duration was usually from two to four weeks; they attracted young and old alike. Tuition was from two to five dollars--and the teacher boarded "around." If three or four attended from one family it was a simple matter of swapping instruction for room and board. By and large they were conducted by itinerant song-masters. The meeting place was a church building--or a brush arbor in good weather--the musical instruments a tuning fork and the church organ. As a general rule the song-master pitched his key from the tuning fork; the organ was more generally used during "recitals" at the end of the school. Two of the more popular teachers were brothers by the name of McCann. Mr. C. E. Holtzclaw and Mr. J. L. McClish also had their day in teaching the people of the community how to sing.

The photograph on Plate 13 dates from the spring or early summer of about 1902. We have made an effort to identify all who are in the picture. They are, reading left to right:

Seated, left: Cecil Jennings, Walker Beecham, Morris Edgar, Marvin Butler; Rice child, standing; Alda Langford, Dovie Jordan, China Joyce, Bertie Harton, Orlue Joyce.

Standing in front row: Mr. Holtzclaw; Johnnie Mae Deere and Anna Mae Moore, holding sign.

All others, left to right: Lem Russell, Elizabeth Horn, Homer Jordan, Conrad Beecham, Bea Caskey, Edna Williams; A. B. Jackson, part of face hidden; Jim Rhodes, behind Mr. Jackson; Ada Deere, Millard Beecham, left hand on book; Elbert Beecham, directly behind Millard Beecham, Essie Nichols, Bertie Caskey, Pink Griffin, rear left of Mr. Holtzclaw; Betty Butler, Ivy Griffin, hair parted in middle; Mollie Nichols, wave in hair over left eye; Will McDaniel, Albert Moore, looking to his right; Mary Joyce, directly behind Johnnie Mae Deere; Lona Harton, face partly concealed; Ethel Page, Walter Beecham, directly behind Ethel Page; Levy Jordan, Sallie Butler, Charlie Woods, directly behind Sallie Butler; Minnie Horn, string tie, Mary Horn, Charlie Rice, four-in-hand tie; Leila Dillingham, Joe Hart, hair parted in middle; Lillie Harton, head inclined to right, Jane Joyce, large white bow in hair; Rose Taylor, dark ruching, Mr. and Mrs. George Rice, behind Rose Taylor; Mabel Williams, left side of face partially hidden; Ollie Russell, Haskell Butler, Orpha Kendrick, Della Taylor; Ester Caskey, hair parted in middle, Daisy Griffin, Pansy Griffin, dark skirt; Donnie Davis, Ludie Butler.

--E.L.

THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

Through the courtesy of Mrs. E. L. Curry (nee Hattie Williams) of Florence we have been privileged to review an old copy of the Briggs Enterprise, Volume 1, No. 13, for Saturday, July 5, 1902. The editors were P. H. and H. B. Burke who, according to their masthead, entered the paper as second-class mail on April 30, 1902. By working backward from July 5, 1902, we can fix the date of the first issue as Saturday, April 12, 1902. The Enterprise enjoyed a degree of prosperity during its first year. But financial difficulties at last caught up with the editors, so that in the summer of 1903 the paper was moved to Bertram and its name changed to "The Bertram Monitor."

Soon after the Enterprise was founded I became a printer's devil and worked at odd hours for many months without a cent of pay. But by the time of its demise my remuneration had reached the handsome figure of fifty cents a week! And I had become quite a typesetter--so much so in fact that when the paper was moved to Bertram I went with it. I was just 12 years old at the time but arrangements were finally made with my father and mother whereby I could go along at \$15.00 per month and board. By remembering that the Briggs school never opened until after the cotton-picking season--and closed when it was time to chop the stuff again--I was able to work on the Monitor at least six months out of the year. But how in the world a 12-year-old was permitted to get that far from home remains a mystery to me to this day.

Inasmuch as I worked on the Enterprise practically every day of its existence, a paragraph or two may be in order as to just how it was put together. Equipment consisted of an old hand-cranked press, possibly six fonts of type, a can or two of ink--and that was that. The paper was a four-page affair, the front and back pages of which were printed elsewhere. Our printing consisted in filling the two inside pages, the type for which we set by hand. Once an issue was off the press the type was again distributed by hand--and the whole process started over again. All of which inevitably led to printer's "itch"--a bedevilment which has plagued every setter-of-type-by-hand since the invention of printing.

The first "home" of the Enterprise was a corner in Mr. J. T. Hall's general store. There for about a year the Burkes published a typical four-page weekly and achieved a reasonable degree of prosperity in a country town of possibly 150 people. Later they moved across the street into a building already occupied by Mr. W. G. Ireland, a photographer--he called himself Traveling Artist--and Dave Ellason's one-chair barbershop. Then, as noted above, when leaner days fell upon them, the Burkes picked up lock, stock and barrel and moved to Bertram where in the summer of 1903 they began publishing the Bertram Monitor.

Before we look at the contents of the old paper a word about how Mrs. Curry came into possession of it is in order. The paper contains an obituary of Mr. R. A. Williams, who died June 26, 1902, at the age of 42 years. Mr. Williams was married to Miss Mary Ellen Stewart on August 20, 1882, and to them were born nine children, one of whom is now Mrs. E. L. Curry of Florence. The young widow filed the paper away in her trunk where it was found following

THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

her death on March 8, 1951. The paper was addressed to Mr. B. H. Stewart, maternal grandfather of Mrs. Curry. Both the Williams and Stewart families have lived in the Mahomet and Briggs communities through at least five generations.

As noted above--and as will be mentioned later in connection with our examination of an old copy of the Briggs Review--a part of the paper was printed elsewhere--in both instances by the Western Newspaper Union of Houston. And as will also be noted later, the WNU in printing its two pages--"boiler plate"--sought to gather material of general reading interest. So let us look at the front and back pages before turning inside for what was printed in Briggs.

Naturally we should expect to find general news items, serials, poems--and advertisements. In the first list there is a story entitled, "Snake Breaks up Picnic"; there are also "The Vision of Jacob" and "The Odd Corner," in which there is a poem "To a Tomcat." Under the advertisements are all kinds of nostrums, ointments and cure-alls. The Houston & Texas Central Railroad invited one to ride its trains and the Santa Fe announced the inauguration of a new sleeping car service from Texas to Colorado. (Just as a matter of record, one boarded H & T C trains in Bertram, Santa Fe trains in Lampasas. The H & T C discontinued passenger service through Bertram nearly 40 years ago; the Santa Fe stopped running its passenger trains into Lampasas about 20 years ago.) There is also the usual run of jokes: "A sailor isn't necessarily a pugilist because he can box the compass."

Let us now turn to the inside pages to see what was happening and what the people were doing in Briggs 60 years ago.

THE ENTERPRISE

Burke & Burke, Propr's

Entered April 30, 1902, as second-class
matter, post office at Briggs, Texas, act
of Congress, Mar. 3, 1879.

One Dollar Per Year.

Saturday, July 5, 1902.

Nineteen-o-two was election year. Among political announcements we find the following men running for state, county and local offices: Lee J. Rountree for state senator; Dayton Moses and J. H. McLean for district attorney; A. W. Moursund, Chas. L. Lauderdale and Clarence Martin for district judge; Ike D. White for county judge; W. C. Galloway for county tax collector; J. M. Taylor, county attorney; J. T. Chamberlain, county clerk; C. C. Stewart, commissioner precinct 2; J. N. Matthews, justice of the peace precinct 7; James G. Cook, district clerk; M. P. Magill, county sheriff; R. W. Cates, county judge (independent); James W. Everett, county tax assessor; M. A. Marrs, commissioner precinct 2.

THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

Since a newspaper depends largely upon advertising for income, we may spend a minute with the advertisers before going to local happenings and events. (We may mention that advertising in the Enterprise took on none of the proportions of advertising in the Review a decade later.) Among the more prominent ads were those of the Moore Hotel, A. B. Jackson, Clinkscales & Co., M. L. Langford, W. T. Jennings.

MOORE HOTEL

W. B. Moore, Prop.

Strictly first-class accomodations.

Special attention given to the traveling
public.

Feed Stable in connection.

A. B. JACKSON

Dealer in

Staple and Fancy Groceries

Will appreciate your patronage

M. L. LANGFORD

Contractor and Builder

Estimates furnished on application

Briggs, Texas

THE GREAT REDUCTION SALE

Clinkscales & Co.

"Chief Cash Store"

W. T. JENNINGS

Dealer in

General Merchandise

HALL & MOORE

for

Fresh Groceries

at Lowest

Cash Price

Store at Post Office

Mention is made elsewhere about how the mail was carried between Briggs and Bertram. A. H. Moore was the carrier in 1902 and advertised as follows:

BRIGGS STAGE LINE

Leave Briggs 6:00 A. M.

Arrive Bertram 11:30 A. M.

Leave Bertram 12:30 P. M.

Arrive Briggs 5:30 P. M.

Daily Except Sunday

All Express matter given prompt and
careful attention. Rate for passengers
75 cents each.

A. H. Moore, Prop'r.

Other advertisers included the City Dining Room of Burnet; J. D. Guthrie and R. A. Patterson, blacksmithing; W. G. Ireland, photographer; Harrell & Burns, hardware and implements; B. S. Hubby, jeweler; Dr. J. F. Taylor, physician;

THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

Dr. Seaton, eye specialist; A. C. Russell, meat market, Florence; Anderson's Livery Stable, Georgetown; Geo. H. Cox, photographer, Burnet.

Under local news items we find:

J. Mat Brown says he is going to Lampasas, Texas, to-day with one foot up and the other down to swing the ladies a-round.

J. S. Smith and family left today for San Angelo to make their future home.

Farmers are busy planting corn this week.

John Goodloe and children went to Corn Hill Thursday.

Marshal Haney was in Lampasas first of the week.

H. B. Burke spent several days in Liberty Hill this week.

Postmaster Hall and Albert Moore went to Austin Friday.

Mrs. Ellen Hickman of near Florence visited Mr. R. A. Patterson and family.

Mrs. J. W. Edgar and children visited relatives and friends in Florence Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Enterprise is under many obligations for help rendered by Marion Guthrie and Ernest Langford this week.

Jno. A. Smith and Miss Minnie Whitley from near Briggs were united in marriage Wednesday, July 2, at the residence of J. C. Greer, Rev. J. M. Sherman officiating.--Burnet Bulletin.

Married.--Sunday, June 29, 1902, at Willow Church, Harris County, Texas, Mr. E. L. McCarty of this place and Miss T. B. Roan of Steuben, Texas, were united in the holy bonds of matrimony, Rev. G. N. Daniels officiating.

Died.--R. A. Williams, second son of James W. and Susan Williams departed this life June 26, 1902. Was born May 20, 1860, was 42 years, 1 month and 6 days old at date of his death. He was married to Miss Ellen Stewart, eldest daughter of B. H. and Harriett Stewart, on the 20th day of August, 1882. There was born unto them 9 children; 7 are living and 2 are dead. He joined the Christian Church and was baptised several years ago, and was a member of the Sycamore Church at the date of his death.

* * *

THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

By a fortuitous circumstance we have been able to fix the date of the first issue of the Bertram Monitor. Even though that has no immediate relationship with the Briggs Enterprise, it may be worth reciting here. Sometime in 1958, Mr. N. Oliver Cox, editor and publisher of the Bertram Enterprise, ran an item about someone's having shown him a copy of the Bertram Monitor for September 12, 1903, the issue being No. 8. By working back from that date, issue No. 1 would have to be dated July 25, 1903. But what makes this September 12, 1903, issue of the Bertram Monitor all the more interesting is the fact that the typesetter used an inverted exclamation point for the letter "i". Hal Burke and I had been breaking in a new "devil"; and thinking that we had him to the point of going it alone we took off for a few days, Hal to Liberty Hill and I to Briggs. But come Monday morning of the next week the devil took off too--which left it to P. H. Burke to set the type. When I returned after a few days I discovered the error and ribbed P. H. about his typesetting. He passed the error off by laying it on to that new devil we were breaking in. But to this day--well, let it go at that.

* * *

And, finally, sixty years later I recall having set some of the type for this issue of the Briggs Enterprise, including the item in which the editors acknowledge the help rendered by Marion Guthrie and

--Ernest Langford.

A SECOND COPY OF THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

Edwin Harton has arranged through the courtesy of Mrs. Hershel Ellett of Bertram for us to review a second copy of the Briggs Enterprise--Volume 1, No. 28, for Saturday, October 18, 1902. No change in format is noted; the front and back pages are still printed by the Western Newspaper Union of Houston.

Under local news we note that Charley Preslar, M. L. Langford and J. D. Guthrie went to Lampasas Sunday; J. Matt Brown, the popular "Ladies man," kept store for Jordan & Horn during the absence of S. A. Jordan this week; Miss Minnie Horn opened up a private school Monday morning; J. W. Edgar and Henry Beacham had their subscriptions extended for another year; Mrs. Ira, Miss Alice and Little Miss Erma West, and Misses Rose and Floy DeWolf, were trading in Florence first of the week; Clarence Baker was attending school in Florence.

The editor might just possibly have been thinking of this last news item when he editorialized:

Not enough interest in school work is manifested by the people around here. It is the duty of every citizen to take an interest in this work and render all help possible to the teachers. We ought to have students coming here to school instead of our boys and girls going off to neighboring towns.

Sound advice sixty years later!

We will take space to repeat five local advertisements.

R. A. PATTERSON
Blacksmith & Wheelwright
Horseshoeing a Specialty

BUY YOUR
Hardware and implements, windmills, buggies
hacks, and wagons, from
Harrell & Burns

DR. J. F. TAYLOR
offers his professional services
to the public.
All calls answered
promptly day or
night.
Briggs, Texas

A SECOND COPY OF THE BRIGGS ENTERPRISE

We Carry A
full line of

STAPLE AND FANCY GROCERIES,

Notion, Stationery, Tinware and Ammunition.
Our Motto: "Quick Sales and Small Profits."
One price to all. Let us serve you.
Yours For Business,

HALL & MOORE

GREAT CLEANING UP CASH COST SALE

150 pairs school shoes from 60 to 80 cents.

SHOES

are not the only things going at cost.

19 lbs. best sugar	\$1.00
Best flour	\$1.00
Fine syrup	30 to 40 cents per gal.
Tobacco	25 to 40 " " 1b.

...Come to see us and be convinced that we
mean business.

...W. T. JENNINGS

We simply must repeat two of the jokes.

Wife--It couldn't be the salad, George. I'd taken great pains
with it!

Husband--Possibly, dear, and I've taken great pains from it!

Gibbs--I am going to give up the pew in our church. I can't
stand that new preacher any longer.

Wife--But, John...

Gibbs--But nothing, Maria; I have not slept a wink for the last
three Sunday mornings.

THE BRIGGS REVIEW

Through the courtesy of John L. McCarty, grandson of that pioneer physician Dr. John C. McCarty, we have been privileged to examine a copy of the Briggs Review, Vol. 1, No. 2, for Thursday, April 11, 1912. The editor was Hal B. Burke who with his brother P. H. Burke had established the Briggs Enterprise some ten years earlier. As was true with the Enterprise--and many other small-town weeklies of fifty and sixty years ago, a part of this copy of the Review was printed elsewhere--"boiler Plate" it was called in newspaper parlance. In this case the printer was again the Western Newspaper Union of Houston. And because the WNU purported to gather material of general interest, we may as well give some space to the contents of these pages before looking at items of local interest. But before we do that let us say that the Briggs Review--at least this copy does--consisted of two sections, each of four pages measuring 13 by 20 inches; it was the inner pages that were printed by the Western Newspaper Union. And we may add that the Review was a better newspaper than was the Enterprise. That goes for the "boiler plate" material as well as for the local work.

First, let us look at some of the advertisements. There are all kinds of nostrums and patent medicines--sure cures for catarrh, colds and stomach ailments; liniments for aching muscles and sore backs; facts for weak women, vermifuges--and so on and on. Then under a "Texas Directory" we find advertised "oil engines" for cotton gins, office and stationery supplies, rubber roofing, fireproof safes; and the Hotel Brazos of Houston advertised itself as "A Comfortable Hotel."

Items which the WNU considered to be of general interest included a syndicated column on the "International Sunday School Lesson"; comments on the doings of the U. S. Supreme Court; news of national, state and foreign import; and a serial, "The Girl From His Town."

There is about a column of jokes--and we might as well listen to a couple of them.

Some Are So by Nature

A certain young man, who prided himself on a brusqueness that he mistook for wit, met an eminent, but touchy, sculptor at a studio supper. "So you're the chap," he said, on being introduced, "that makes mud heads?" "Not all of them," the sculptor replied, quietly.

The Natural Thing.

Lawyer--Of what did you take cognizance in the saloon?
Witness--I took a drink.

Now for items of local interest. Spread across the front page is the name of the paper, its volume and number, etc.

THE BRIGGS REVIEWTHE BRIGGS REVIEW

Vol. 1 No. 2

Briggs, Burnet County, Texas.

April 11, 1912

Briggs Publishing Company

H. B. Burke, Ed. and Pub.

The masthead on the fourth page heads the editorial column.

THE BRIGGS REVIEW

by The Briggs Publishing Co.

Thursday April 11, 1912

Application made to enter the Postoffice at
Briggs, Texas, as second-class matter.

Subscription Price \$1 a year in Advance.

Advertising Rates Reasonable.

Hal B. Burke, Editor.

Looking first at the advertisers, we find the Ratliff-Lindsey Company taking the bottom half of the front page to advertise seasonable merchandise, fancy dress goods, white goods and linens, laces, embroideries, ribbons; suits, shoes, boots, hats in staple and fancy shapes, newest in straws; gents furnishings of every description; groceries, everyday staples; saddles, wagon and plow harness; buggy harness, bridles, collars, pads; a complete line of tin and granite-wear, china and glassware.

W. E. Clinkscates & Company also take a half-page to say that

SPRING TIME IS HERE

And So Are We

With one of the most up-to-date lines of
spring and summer suits for men and boys....
Ask to see our \$12.50 suits....We are giving
an Extra-ordinary Discount on all No. 6 Men's
Shoes...

Itemized Bill With Each Purchase.

C. S. Baker & Company advertise

Moon Brothers, Ratterman & Luth and
Hercules Buggies. Also hardware,
wagons, harness, stoves, windmills,
all kinds of implements.

And G. E. Gude and W. O. Daniels announce the installation of a

Sorghum Mill.

We will install a cane mill with
gasoline engine on W. E. Gude's farm
two miles south of Briggs, to begin
making sorghum from the early cane
crops.

THE BRIGGS REVIEW

Dr. E. M. Stipp, Dentist, simply announces that his office is at Stewart & Johnson's, Briggs, Texas.

Other simple but to-the-point advertisers included the following:

Briggs State Bank: With a capital of \$15,000.
Officers: Will Rancier, Pres.
H. J. McGuire, V-Pres.
R. A. McCann, Cashier
Directors: Will Rancier, H. J. McGuire,
R. A. McCann, J. T. Hall,
M. Patterson.

J. F. Taylor: For drugs, patent medicines, toilet articles,
perfumes. Personal attention given to pre-
scriptions.

City Barber Shop: C. E. Preslar, Prop.
Shaves, haircuts and massages. Prompt work
and courteous treatment.

L. R. Joyce: Blacksmith and Woodwork.
Horseshoeing a Specialty. Satisfaction
guaranteed.

Stewart & Johnson: Dealers in Staple and Fancy Groceries.

The Hardware Barber Shop. Wants your trade. We need it
and will appreciate it.

J. A. King

Advertisers from nearby were Atkinson's Drug Store of Florence; Florence
Mercantile Co., Andice and Florence, M. O. Daley, Manager.

And in the interest of the breeding of better livestock Joyce & Price
advertised that their "all-purpose horse DAN is 16½ hands high, weight 1400
lbs.," and that he "will make the season at T. S. Price's ranch 1½ miles
west of Briggs"; John H. Reavis would stand his jack NAPOLEON and a young
all-purpose horse at the Three Knobs Ranch; and Mr. W. B. Moore would stand
his jack MOSCOW "at my place about 3 miles East of Briggs on the Florence
road."

All fees were "\$10.00 insured."

Under local items "Reporter" noted that the "free school will close next
week on the 19th of April," and admonished those who had been "absent the
past week to come in next week and take their examinations." The graduating
class consisted of four--"but what they lack in numbers they make up in
knowledge." Graduating exercises were scheduled for Saturday night, May 11,

THE BRIGGS REVIEW

with Professor Richie (Richey) of Burnet delivering the diplomas and making the closing address. And in connection with the closing of school, Mr. F. B. Parsons ran this notice in the Review:

School Notice.

I will teach three weeks subscription school and will make special effort to help those that are deficient in some subjects. Will teach all grades that come.

F. B. Parsons

The editor deplored the lack of sidewalks in a brief editorial:

When last we lived in Briggs we were strongly in favor of sidewalks and haven't changed our opinion yet. Some good work has been done on the streets, but little or nothing in the way of walks. Let's put a few rocks along the residence streets any way and in bad weather we will learn to jump from one to the other without bogging up in the mud. Better still, build good walks.

Under "Local News. Newsy items relative to the coming and going of your friends and neighbors."

W. S. Dillingham spent a couple of days in La Grange this week.

Will Green and wife of Florence came in Wednesday to visit relatives.

Our old friend Jim Taylor remembered us with a dollar the first of the week.

Dr. Jno. McCarty will leave for California in a short while where he will visit relatives. (A typographical error makes "relatives" read "relaiives.")

Elder W. F. Baker will preach at Mt. Moriah Church Saturday and Sunday morning at eleven o'clock.

Horace Clinkscales tried his hand at the printing business last week. He helped with the inking apparatus and considering his age, must say he has the sticking quality.

About thirty local sportsmen, with a pack of greyhounds, spent Monday afternoon on a Jack Rabbit hunt. They report some splendid races and fifteen rabbits captured.

Will Moore, Jim Taylor, Clarence Baker, Cleavy Pulliam and Charley West composed an auto party to Austin Thursday, returning Friday. (The "i" in Friday is turned upside down.)

THE BRIGGS REVIEW

Other miscellaneous items include the following:

Mr. W. A. Nichols offers a reward for information leading to the return of "A brindle bitch. Half Greyhound and half Stag."

About 1 1/2 inch rain fell here Saturday night. The prospect for a good crop is very flattering.

R. M. Pearce and R. P. Ray are candidates for the office of county tax collector.

G. E. West, J. T. Harton, W. H. Taylor, Clarence Dillingham, L. A. Ellason, J. W. Jordan, J. M. Ellason, J. M. Priest, John Patterson, J. W. Edgar, James B. Montgomery, C. O. West and G. R. Taylor all made the editor's "Honor Roll" by becoming subscribers to the Review.

As our last item from the Briggs Review for Thursday, April 11, 1912, we quote "Return Greetings." It would be interesting to know the name of the poet who welcomed in verse Mr. Burke's return to Briggs.

RETURN GREETINGS.

O, Briggs Review
We welcome you!
The vanguard of Success.
No city yet that ever grew
Unaided by the Press.

O, Briggs Review,
We know that you
Will many trials meet;
But we will try to see you through
Till Victory we Greet.

--In Behalf of the Public

* * *

We are safe in fixing the date of the first issue of the Briggs Review as April 4, 1912. The issue for April 11, 1912, is listed as "Vol. 1. No. 2." And in this issue the editor refers to a typographical error in "last week's paper." We have not a shred of information at the moment which in any way indicates just how long the Review was published. Our guess would be that its life was comparable to that of its predecessor, the Briggs Enterprise--about two years or so, give or take a little.

THE TELEPHONE COMES TO BRIGGS

In the early 1900s--possibly in 1904--a telephone company known as the Briggs Rural Telephone Company was organized by Mr. G. W. (Dade) Taylor and others interested in bringing the telephone to Briggs. A switchboard was first located in a corner of the John Henry Lewis cafe. The face of the board was about ten by twelve inches; the whole mechanism--seat for operator and all--occupied a space of possibly 15 square feet! Mr. R. M. J. (Dick) Pulliam was the first local subscriber. Other lines were soon run to different communities with many telephones on each line--there were 18 on the Ridge Line which extended toward Oakalla. Everyone had a different ring--short-long-short, short-two longs, and so on--and practically everybody listened in on the conversations.

The story is told of how one young swain and his inamorata sought to circumvent this eavesdropping. Without ringing they simply picked up their receivers at exactly eight o'clock each evening and began talking. This went on for quite awhile. But at long last their secret leaked out. Word was passed about, a conspiracy was formed with the operator, and the result was that at eight o'clock every night the entire system was alive with eavesdroppers. Their suspicions were finally aroused when different ones would ring in on them and say, "Sorry, we didn't hear the phone ring." And thus a well-laid plan went agley.

After a few years in the John Henry Lewis cafe the switchboard was moved to what is now the Dock Lee house; and finally to its present location--a combination dwellinghouse and telephone office. Among the first operators were Miss Maude Rainey and Robert M. (Bob) Pearce--who were later married and were the parents of four children. Mr. Pearce was more than an operator; he was a mechanic and as such installed the first really permanent switchboard. Other operators through the years were Miss Belle Stewart, Jess Gude, Mr. and Mrs. James Heine, the Harton girls--Lillie, Lessie, Dollie; Mrs. J. W. Glaspy, Miss Tennie Hasty; Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Wooten, Mrs. M. S. Dwyer, Mr. and Mrs. L. W. Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Williams; Mrs. Sallie Lester, Mr. and Mrs. L. Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Ballard; Myrtle and Audrey Kammett, Mrs. Joe Dixon, Mrs. Mitchell and Miss Ora Mitchell. The telephone company has this year--1960--been sold to the Burnet Telephone Company and will within a short time be converted to a dial system with headquarters in Burnet. Thus the Briggs Rural Telephone Company passes out of existence. Dues which have been \$1.50 per month, \$8.75 for six months, or \$17.00 per year, will undoubtedly be increased when the new system is installed.

In 1956 the Bell System ran lines to Rocky Creek and Oakalla, thus causing the rural system to be discontinued in those localities. Soon thereafter Florence was converted to the dial system, and Lampasas was eliminated by the flood of 1957. Now Briggs and Bertram are the only two communities on rural lines where we can talk "free."

Many fine citizens of Briggs have served through the years as directors of the local telephone system. Among them may be mentioned L. S. Skaggs, J. M. Smith, J. L. Taylor, Thad R. Carson, J. L. McCarty, C. S. Morris, Thomas

THE TELEPHONE COMES TO BRIGGS

Burch, and of course Mr. G. W. Taylor, who was instrumental in bringing the telephone to Briggs in the first place. Others have served various short terms, but these may be said to be the ones who have weathered the storms of the years.

Through the courtesy of Mr. L. W. Stewart the following minute of the board dated May 25, 1908, has been made available.

5-25-08

We the directors of the rural Telephone Co. of Briggs, have decided to hire the switchboard moved by some carpenter or competent person or persons, using all material to the best advantage making a good and supstinceal line to the switchboard.

2nd

Have decided to refuse service to all that are in arear untill all arearage is paid up in full.

S. R. Skaggs

G. W. Taylor

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs & E.L.

THE TORNADO OF APRIL 1906

Let two old-timers who lived in Briggs in 1906 get together anywhere and it is a safe bet that before many minutes have passed they will get around to the tornado of April 12, 1906. Even though more than a half of a century has passed since the terrifying experience, the probability is that not one who went through it has failed in the intervening years to "look at the clouds" on April 12. Although we gave considerable space to the tornado in the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School--especially to the destruction of the schoolhouse--a more general treatment seems appropriate here. In the FQC we quoted from the Austin Statesman for Friday, April 13, 1960. Here we will begin by quoting from the Florence Vidette of April 14, 1906--and with an expression of our appreciation for that privilege to Mr. R. N. Watson of Florence, in whose keeping old files of the Vidette have been entrusted. More is the pity that "progress" has made the publishing of such weekly newspapers a losing proposition--for the Vidette gave up the ghost in 1948. And in passing--and for the record--let it be noted that for several months I was the Briggs "correspondent" to the Vidette in 1905 or 1906. The next several paragraphs between the stars are from the Florence Vidette of April 14, 1906.

* * *

A VERY SEVERE STORM!

Wind, Hail and Rain Do Great Damage
About One Half of the Town
of Briggs Blown
Away

Thirty-one Injured

(Note: About three-fourths of the first column in the report is given over to a general description of the stormy conditions which prevailed over the countryside the afternoon of April 12, 1906. Heavy rains were reported; hail stones "which were as large as a medium sized hen's egg" were picked up in Florence; all creeks were flooded; the roaring of the storm "which could be heard easily in Florence was awe inspiring." Then follows the greater part of two columns devoted to the destruction wrought at Briggs. In quoting we have made minor corrections in spelling and punctuation.)

WRECK AT BRIGGS

The wires are all down leading into our little sister city, Briggs, which is located ten miles northwest from Florence. But the message came from there about sundown Thursday, calling for our doctors and all other assistance that could be secured. Our two doctors accompanied by quite a number of men left immediately for the scene, all having to go on horseback on account of high water, mud and obstruction along the road. Some of those who went returned early this Friday morning and from them we gather the following information:

THE TORNADO OF APRIL 1906

Upon arriving in the town they had to get down off their horses and feel their way through the wreck on the streets. Wires were strung promiscuously across the streets; wagons, buggies, plows, and all kinds of vehicles were piled in the streets; lumber and household goods mixed together were piled here and yonder in almost all directions. Lots that had contained good houses were swept bare, and the town resembled a complete wreck in the darkness.

The Injured

Arnet Taber--back supposed to be broken; Mrs. Arnet Taber, seriously hurt internally; Miss Inez Hickman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ira Hickman of near Florence, who was visiting in Briggs--back badly injured and otherwise hurt; Mrs. Bob Patterson--shoulder dislocated; two small boys of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Patterson--one had his arm broken in three places and injured in the chest, the other completely scalped, jaw bone broken, and otherwise badly injured; Prof. Price--badly bruised about the face and head; Mabel DeWolf--arm broken; Tom Hall--nose broken and other wounds about the face and head; a boy of Dick Pulliam's--arm broken; a boy of Mark Langford's--one eye out and the other injured; Mr. Geo. Jolly, badly injured.

Full information is hard to get on account of the wires being down, but the above is a list of those most seriously injured. It is stated that 31 persons in all were injured by the falling houses and flying debris.

It is said that Joe Hart, a clerk in one of the stores, started to quit the building when it was in the act of wrecking, and just as he stepped outside the house the storm picked him up, whirled him through the air about 100 yards, when he caught a telephone pole, and held a tight grip thereon until the storm subsided.

Report has it that 16 persons were in one house when the house was completely blown away hurting none of the occupants.

List of Buildings Completely Wrecked

Some blown clear away to where they cannot be identified. The school building; hardware store of Harrell & Burns; Bob Patterson's blacksmith shop; John Joyce's blacksmith shop; Bob Patterson's residence; Ireland Joseph's residence; the Rice residence, occupied by Alex Cloud and family; postoffice building; Arnett Taber's residence; Jesse Gude's residence; Haney's residence; George Jolly's residence; H. DeWolf's residence, off foundation and partly wrecked. Dr. Taylor's drug store; Clinkscates & Co.'s store building; Moore store building; Jordan building; J. W. Edgar's store building; Mark Langford's residence.

THE TORNADO OF APRIL 1906

We realize that this list of important buildings may not be complete, and it is said that at almost every place in the town there were barns, smoke houses, sheds, etc., destroyed.

This is considered the worst storm that has ever visited this part of the country. The storm came from the southwest and traveled a northeasterly course, and its track is plainly marked about one mile from the town of Briggs on either side. The storm cut a path about 65 yards wide, sweeping everything in its path to destruction. The story of the blacksmith, Bob Patterson, will serve to give you an idea of what condition some people found themselves (in) after the storm. Every member of his family was found under the wreck of his home after some searching; not one escaped without a serious wound and some of them perhaps fatal. Not a plank of his blacksmith shop was left on the lot, and his tools have not been found; his residence was served in a like manner, and not a vestige of his household goods, clothing, etc., could be found. A new surrey which he had recently purchased was found to contain one sound wheel while the rest of it was twisted and wrecked until it was scarcely recognizable.

It is said that it was hard for those present to tell which way the cyclone came or went, but that it cut a half-circle path through the town sweeping everything in its path. This is indeed a sad calamity that has befallen our little sister city. It is thought that some of the injured will not recover, but let us hope for the best....and that Briggs will soon recover from her financial loss, and be found doing a thriving business at the same old stand.

* * *

A personal word: The Langford boy who was reported as having "one eye out and the other injured" recovered completely and 55 years later is compiling these annals of Briggs, its times and its people.

Since beginning the compilation of these notes we have had opportunity to "review" the tornado with several people--some by conversation, some by correspondence. Mrs. Justin A. Edgar (nee Pearl Fewell) of Plainview, Texas, though just a girl of ten at the time, remembers that her house was converted into a hospital within minutes after the tornado struck and that the two most seriously injured who were given what attention was possible were Arnet Taber and his wife. The Tabers lived just across the street from her parents. Though their house was not over forty feet away it was completely demolished, whereas the Fewell home suffered only minor damage and is still standing fifty-odd years later.

Mrs. A. B. Moore (nee Mary Horn) remembers particularly the destruction wrought near her home and the injuries received when neighboring homes were

THE TORNADO OF APRIL 1906

destroyed. Although the home of her parents received minor damage, the homes of Mr. and Mrs. George Jolly, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Cloud and Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Patterson only about three blocks to the east were completely demolished. Thirteen school children had stopped in at the Cloud home. Mrs. Cloud huddled them and her own children together in a single room just before the home was scattered in all directions. Only the floor of the room in which they were gathered was left. Several of the children were injured and Mrs. Cloud's three-months-old baby was blown from her arms. Two of the Patterson children were seriously injured; Mrs. Patterson's sister, Miss Inez Hickman, who was visiting her at the time received injuries from which she died some weeks later. The Horn home was immediately filled with the injured; dry clothes were found even though some of the smaller boys were dressed in girl's clothes; every available space was covered with pallets and beds and all made as comfortable as possible pending the arrival of doctors.

BRIGGS: A LONG WAY BACK

I have seen many changes take place in and around Briggs--changes which shall always arouse fond memories in my heart for the town and its wonderful people. When I was a small child Mr. Tom Hall was postmaster. He also sold candies and other items which appealed to a child's fancy and desires. To me he was simply "Tom Hall"--I just called him that as if his name were one word. And as I remember it, I just didn't think I could buy candy from any one but Tom Hall!

Mr. Hall's brother, Mr. Mordecai Hall, lived with his family next to my father's ranch. His daughters Una (Mrs. Una Hall Gilbert of Wichita Falls) and Allie--we called her "Peachie"--and their younger sisters and I had great times playing together. (I also played many times with Snow, Bryan and Evelyn Skaggs.) In summertime it was our vacation for the two families to load our wagons with camping equipment, food for us and feed for our horses, and go to the Lampasas River near Oakalla for a week's outing and fishing. We were assured of plenty of fish as a seine was always taken along.

My father built a private telephone line from our ranch to Briggs. This must have been in 1905 as we had a telephone before the tornado struck Briggs.

Briggs was a thriving little town in the horse and buggy days and made rapid recovery from the destruction wrought by the tornado. Most everyone came to town on Saturday afternoons to purchase supplies, meet with friends and visit. Parties and ice cream suppers furnished entertainment for young and old and during the holiday season "42" parties were popular. The ladies of the community would give ice cream suppers in the summer and oyster suppers in the winter to raise funds to help build the Baptist tabernacle which was used by other denominations for revival services in the summer.

In the summer of 1916 our house was remodeled. Lumber was hauled from Bertram by freight wagon. Mr. Horn was in charge of the remodeling as carpenter-in-chief and one of the workmen was Walter Fewell. Mr. Horn made the trip to and from work by horse and buggy during the three months the work was under way. At about the time we began the remodeling a salesman came along and demonstrated a carbide light plant for rural home use. My father bought one which remained in use until the LCRA brought electricity to the rural homes in 1938 or 1939.

In the fall of 1916 my father bought a Buick touring car. That was long before we had highways so little speeding was done then. When "moving pictures" came to Briggs they did a thriving business. One had to get to the show early if he wanted a seat. Otherwise he stood up.

As cars increased in numbers and good roads were built business gradually declined. Fires took their toll over the years; businesses changed hands, others simply quit, and often in the case of the death of the owners, heirs and relatives did not carry on. About all that survives today of the Briggs as I knew it are the post office, a grocery store, the school, and two of the three churches.

BRIGGS: A LONG WAY BACK

My memories of the past and of the friends who made Briggs the community that it was are to me a precious heritage.

--Mrs. Rose McGuire Kinser

BRIGGS IN 1919

When I came to Briggs in 1919 to make my home as the wife of Snow Skaggs I found a thriving, bubbling city with many active business people enjoying a big volume of business, especially in the fall of the year when King Cotton was being picked and marketed. The two main business establishments were the B. F. Lindsey store and the Ratliff-Moore Company. These firms carried large stocks of merchandise consisting principally of ladies' and men's ready-to-wear, shoes, hats, dry goods, groceries, hardware, tobaccos of every description--especially the brand known as Brown Mule chewing tobacco. In the Lindsey store a balcony was necessary to accommodate the large stock of ladies' ready-to-wear, and to furnish an area of privacy where selecting and fitting could be done. Mrs. J. L. Patterson, Mrs. B. F. Lindsey, Mrs. George Juby, Misses Ruth Dillingham and Eula Clark were able and efficient sales ladies always eager to please. On special occasions, especially when a competent supervisor skilled in the art of selling came along and put on a giant sale or a bargain week, many other sales people were employed. Attention and interest were stimulated by contests or guessing games. The latter involved a jar or jars filled with beans or walnuts or brass tacks stuck in a large display board. To the one guessing nearest the number of beans, walnuts or tacks a valuable prize was awarded. These contests were usually decided on Saturday afternoons and always resulted in large crowds gathering in the stores.

The Ratliff-Moore Company was really two stores combined into one. Dry goods were found on one side of a central partition and groceries on the other. Both men worked full time in the store as did Miss Leona Hall for a number of years. Other clerks were needed at times, especially when new lines of fashionable clothes for both men and women were displayed. Fine dress materials such as silks, linens, satins, filled the shelves and display racks. The best dressed ladies nowhere wore finer clothes than did the women of Briggs who bought theirs from these two local stores.

The principal drugstore was owned by Jack Joyce who with a competent employee named Bud Mitchell supplied every need of the community in drugs, jewelry and cosmetics. The store was later purchased by two brothers, Pomeroy and Hastings Smith, the latter of whom made a study of medicine as he went along and was almost as good at prescribing patent medicines as was any practicing physician. I remember quite well one occasion when my little sister Mary was spending some time with me. One day at the dinner table she became

BRIGGS IN 1919

choked when a small bone lodged in her throat. We hurriedly started to Florence to a doctor, but as we went through Briggs Pomeroy looked in her mouth, took some kind of an instrument and removed the bone with the skill of a physician.

Clevy Pulliam owned and operated a theater in which he showed the best pictures of the time on Friday and Saturday nights. The serials drew large crowds as interest ran high at every stopping place which made it necessary to see the next episode to determine whether or not the hero or heroine escaped the villain.

As in every community around 1900, the gin was a thriving and prosperous business. The West gin had been in operation for many years at Gum Springs when John and Lloyd Ellason erected a new gin in Briggs in 1904--and which they continued to own and operate until 1919 when it was sold to D. C. Reed & Co. and E. L. Eaves made manager. Mr. Eaves continued as manager until 1937. S. R. Dillingham became manager in that year and continued in that capacity until 1954. Finally, in 1955, the gin was dismantled and sold to a West Texas concern.

The successful operation of any gin depends largely upon the loyalty of the crew--and nowhere was this truer than in Briggs. For one of the crews which worked long and late for many years was composed of Snow Skaggs as engineer, Marvin West as stand man, Faye Shields as suction operator, Harry Horn as bookkeeper, Georgie Dillingham and Link Baker as pressmen, Horace Clinkscales as weigher and E. L. Eaves as manager. The efficiency of this crew is evidenced by the record of their having ginned 919 bales in 18 days. Day after day and night after night they worked to keep up with the many bales of cotton which at times stacked up to be as many as fifty in the yard. There were no coffee breaks for the gin hands. Wives or other relatives simply brought their dinners and suppers which the men ate as they carried on their various jobs. Mr. Eaves was a competent manager, his men were loyal to him and took pride in maintaining the high standard of service which he expected.

Every Saturday was Trades Day in Briggs in 1919. Throngs of people gathered in town; along with transient laborers and the local people they bought their weekly supplies from the local business houses. The transients were largely Mexicans engaged in picking cotton. Few of the local people knew any Spanish and the Mexicans knew little English, so much chattering and pointing was necessary before any purchase could be made. These transients would buy one article at a time, pay for it, count their money, buy another article, pay for it and count their money--a procedure which was kept up until most of the money was spent. They paid cash for every purchase, merchants always giving "pelones" to encourage their continued patronage.

About the middle of every Saturday afternoon well-dressed women began a parade downtown in their Sunday best. Some even went so far as to wear evening clothes and pattern hats. Many were able to wear \$20 high-topped shoes. I owned such a pair myself but only because they were my wedding shoes!

BRIGGS IN 1919

The Christmas season was a gala time for both young and old during the first two or three decades of this century. A community tree on Christmas Eve was the high light of the holiday season. Weeks before the day rolled around committees were appointed to get the tree and decorate it, to arrange a program appropriate to the season, to see that gifts were properly placed and distributed, and arrange for Santa Claus. Most of the decorating consisted in the proper placing of gifts and presents. Dolls, toys, fruits and candies were arranged at vantage points on the tree while under it on the floor were the larger presents such as bicycles, tricycles and wagons. Every child in the community received a present, oftentimes as not the gift of some donor who insisted that his identity remain forever secret.

Once the people were seated and ready Santa Claus came charging in with a cow bell, much to the amusement of the youngsters. Many of the smaller ones would become scared and cry but were soon pacified by Santa. Preceding the distribution of gifts a program consisting of poems, songs, dialogues, pantomimes, and a tableau was presented by local talent. Adults entered as heartily into the fun as did the children. They played pranks on each other as in the case of the wrapping and re-wrapping of a package of cigarettes into a carton as big as a suitcase.

Some of the men who played Santa Claus year after year were John Binnion, Elishia Price, Milton Cehand, Roberts Dillingham, Isam Storey and Jim Rhodes.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

ELECTRIC POWER COMES TO BRIGGS

According to the best information available at the moment (1960), Briggs made its first use of electric power when the Briggs Power and Light Company was organized in 1921 or 1922. The company was organized by local citizens and business interests who subscribed for 20 shares at \$100 per share for a total capitalization of \$2,000. Organizers and the number of shares each subscribed for were: W. A. Nichols 1, B. F. Warden, Jr. 1, B. F. Lindsey 2, Ratliff-Moore Company 4, Smith Drug Company 1, H. R. Caskey 2, Briggs State Bank 1, J. T. Hall 2, W. E. Clinkscales 1, Carson Brothers 1, Jordan's Store 1, J. S. Dillingham 1, R. G. T. Pulliam 1, Briggs Gin Company 1.

The first system was a "direct current" system. Current came from a series of batteries, possibly some 20 or 25 in number. They were charged by a motor which ran four or five hours during the day.

Texas Power and Light Company bought out--or just took over--the local system in 1935 and extended lines to the nearer rural areas. In many instances this system is still supplying current to original customers. Further expansion was made throughout the rural area by the Lower Colorado River Authority upon the completion of the Buchanan dam and reservoir some twenty years ago.

An interesting sidelight to the original lighting system was interference with radio reception. J. C. Wright and Will Nichols built a receiving set and succeeded in getting good reception a number of times. Later B. F. Warden bought a radio, then the Smith brothers purchased one for their drugstore. People came for far and near to see the novelties--but interference of some kind made good reception impossible. Later it was discovered that the Delco unit was the cause. Arrangements were then made to stop the motor on the nights of good programs! As more radios made their way into Briggs a sort of game was played--who had succeeded in "tuning in" the station farthest away? Probably the most ardent fan was Mr. Jack Smith--it seemed that he had the greatest success in tuning in the most distant station.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

BRIGGS IN THE TWENTIES AND FORTIES

On July 4, 1921, my later father, W. E. Faith, took us children and our mother to Burnet to a picnic and to visit an aunt who lived there. (We lived at that time at Lone Grove in Llano County where he taught school in the year 1920-1921.) At that picnic my father met Mr. C. A. Baker, a member of the school board at Briggs--and as a result of that meeting he was elected principal of the Briggs school in 1921. Late in August, or possibly early in September of that year, we moved to Briggs, taking our worldly possessions in two wagons. A day or two after our arrival in Briggs my father went to Goldthwaite to spend a week at a tri-county teachers institute. And during that week the September flood of '21 came--and did it rain! Father started home at the end of the week but could only make it as far as Rocky Creek. What with high waters and road construction he could not cross the creek. He spent the night with a family on the north side of Rocky and come the next day he left his Ford there and walked home. A week later he and I went back after the car. In his absence Mr. B. F. Lindsey sold us groceries on credit; he had never met my father--just knew that he was the new principal. The people of Briggs were very friendly to us that week--as indeed they were through many years to come.

My father served as principal of the Briggs school for two years, 1921-1923, but we lived there several years longer while he taught in neighboring schools, two being the schools at Long Grove and Mahomet. When he went to Briggs the school building was the big two-story frame structure which had been erected following the storm of 1906. And by the way, my father was teaching in the Mill Creek school at the time of the storm. I believe it was in 1923 that he, Mr. C. A. Baker, and several other interested patrons of the Briggs school, decided that a new building was needed. They succeeded in calling a bond election which after a very heated campaign was carried by a close vote--54-52 as I recall. We then went to school for a year in churches and other buildings while the new building was under construction. I finished the tenth grade and "graduated" in the new building in 1926. I then graduated from the Austin High School in 1927 and entered the University of Texas that fall. But when I first entered in Briggs I was in the sixth grade and Mrs. Stella Skaggs was my teacher.

I returned to Briggs as superintendent of the school in 1942 and spent three years in that position. The war years were hard ones but the people of Briggs supported the war effort by buying bonds and supporting their school. I have now been in the Temple public schools for eight years.

Yes, Briggs means a great deal to me. I have pleasant recollections of the people, the school, the churches, the cotton gin, the town. My three youngest brothers and sisters and my youngest child were born there. And my sister just younger than I died there and is buried in the Dillingham cemetery. I taught my first school at Mahomet in 1929-1930--where I met my wife, nee Alice Williams. So you see, Briggs and its environs have meant much to me through the years.

--J. N. Faith

THE BRIGGS CEMETERIES

Briggs has three cemeteries, all of which are within a mile or two of town. There is some uncertainty about which is the oldest but it is very probably what is known today as the DeWolf, Mill Creek or Dillingham cemetery. All have been recently fenced and are well kept.

The Prairie View cemetery was originally associated with the Methodist Church--a church which was dedicated the third Sunday in May of 1892. This church was moved into Briggs in 1906. First known simply as the Methodist cemetery, it was later called the Greene cemetery; it is known today as the Prairie View cemetery. Comprising some 1.65 acres, it is located about two miles south of town. So far as is known, the first person to be buried there was Mr. James Smith, father of Mr. J. S. Smith who was principal of the Briggs school for several years and who himself was buried there in 1940. The elder Mr. Smith came to the United States from Scotland and lived in this part of the country for many years.

The Mount Moriah cemetery is located about one and a half miles southeast of Briggs on what at one time was the Briggs-Florence road. The area is approximately two acres; it takes its name from the Mount Moriah Primitive Baptist Church. There is some doubt about who was the first person buried in this cemetery. Mr. Ernest Taylor, who has lived all of his life in Briggs and who has missed but few of the funerals in either of the cemeteries during the past sixty years, says the first person to be buried there was one Steve Taylor, an itinerant farm laborer who shot and killed himself about 1900 or a year or two before. He further says that this Steve Taylor was unrelated to the Taylors who were early settlers in the community; that no one knew anything about him other than that he worked around for various farmers in the late 1890s.

The third cemetery is known today as the Dillingham cemetery and is located about a mile north and east of town. Of about two acres in area, the land was an original gift of Mr. Homer DeWolf who came to the community in the 1880s. At first called the DeWolf cemetery, it was later called Mill Creek, but is today commonly referred to as the Dillingham cemetery. Mr. DeWolf sold his ranch to Mr. W. S. Dillingham a few years after 1900 and in the deed of sale the area was further restricted to be used as a cemetery. It is generally believed that the first interments there were bodies which were moved from near a thicket on the J. L. Patterson farm west of Briggs.

The question of improving the cemeteries was first raised by Roberts Dillingham and at the second homecoming in 1958 an appeal was made for funds for that purpose. The appeal was repeated in 1959 and all told the amount of \$3,636 was donated for improvements. The cemeteries were first cleaned, leveled, sunken places filled, and then enclosed in a cyclone fence--all completed and paid for in March 1960.

Realizing that some kind of an organization was necessary to perpetuate the care and maintenance of the cemeteries, the Briggs Cemetery Association was organized in 1959. Following are the minutes of that first meeting:

THE BRIGGS CEMETERIES

MINUTES OF FIRST MEETING

Briggs Cemetery Association

The Briggs Cemetery Association met Thursday night, October 22, 1959, with the following present: H. E. Harton, S. R. Dillingham, L. W. Stewart, Faye Shields, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Clinkscales and Jack Patterson.

Trustees for the three cemeteries were elected as follows:

Mill Creek or Dillingham	Mount Moriah	Prairie View
S. R. Dillingham	H. E. Harton	Jack Patterson
George Lane	J. A. Taylor	J. M. Smith
Horace Clinkscales	J. L. Taylor	Charlie Hasty

Mrs. L. S. Skaggs was elected secretary-treasurer.

Bids for the building of three fences were opened and considered carefully. An award to the lowest bidder was postponed until an investigation could be made as to quality of materials to be used.

S/Mrs. L. S. Skaggs
Sec.-Treas.

At a later meeting on November 1, 1959, a contract was awarded to the Atlas Fence Company of San Antonio, Texas. Old fences were removed and construction of new ones begun. The completed cost was \$2,961, leaving a balance in cash of \$675.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs & E.L.

BRIGGS POSTMASTERS

Five postmasters have served Briggs since the first post office was established on March 27, 1888. The first official name of the community was Taylor's Gin, a name which was changed to Briggs on June 21, 1898. According to all of the information available at this time, agitation for a change in name was begun by Mr. J. M. Brown soon after his appointment as postmaster on March 16, 1898. Listed below are the names of the men who have served as postmasters and the dates of their appointments.

James W. Edgar, March 27, 1888

James M. Brown, March 16, 1898

Jesse T. Hall, January 9, 1899

William E. Clinkscales, August 21, 1920

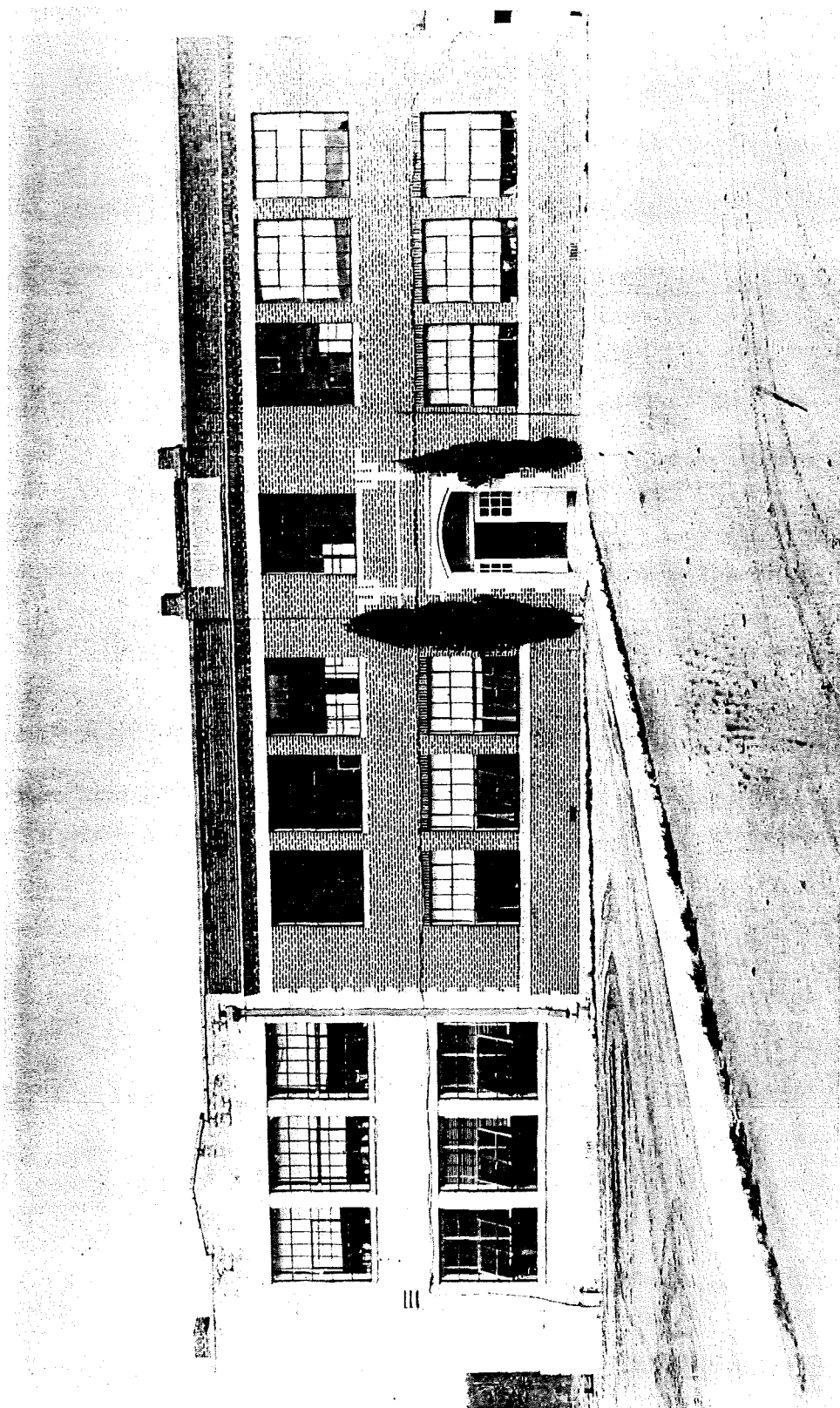
Horace Clinkscales, July 24, 1944; still in office

Mr. Brown's full name was James Matthew Brown. He was familiarly and affectionately known as "Uncle Matt"; some called him "Uncle Matty." His gravestone in the Mount Moriah cemetery bears the inscription "J. Mat Brown" and the dates of his birth and death as March 24, 1836, and January 20, 1906. More about the other men who have served as postmasters will be found in the biographical sketches of families.

THE BRIGGS STATE BANK

The Briggs State Bank was chartered on May 27, 1909, and opened for business on June 1, 1909. Its capital stock was \$15,000. Stockholders and directors were: Will Rancier of Killeen, president; H. J. McGuire of Briggs, vice president; G. P. Stallworth of Killeen, cashier; J. T. Hall and M. Patterson, both of Briggs. The bank was absorbed by the Union State Bank of Florence on February 4, 1928.

--Department of Banking
Austin, Texas



BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING
Brick unit erected in 1923; stone addition in 1933. Site is still the same as that on which first building was erected in 1894 following removal of the school from Gum Springs.

THE BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL

When we left off with the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School--that would be at the end of the school year 1905-1906--we left an ungraded school confronted with the problem of rebuilding. Somewhere along the way a lot of study must have been given to reorganization; for the next bit of information of an authoritative nature which we can find is the report card of Dollie Harton, a young lady in the third grade. Dollie's report card is reproduced later. Our reason for mentioning it now is that it shows an array of subjects which one would expect to find in any high school of fifty years ago--subjects which must always form the building stones of any educational program worthy of the name. One also notes another significant fact--the board of trustees has been increased to seven in number--seven men who were respected and trusted by the community--seven men who were determined that the program of the Briggs High School should be one whose roots ran down to fundamentals.

The Briggs High School came into being about 1912--just thirty years following the first effort down at old Gum Springs in 1882-1883, and it would seem that a few words about the physical facilities that existed through the years may be in order. First, of course, was the one-room structure at Gum Springs. This was followed by the two-story building erected in 1894, to which a two-story unit was added in 1904--all of which was destroyed in April of 1906. Then came another two-story structure in 1906-1907, to be followed by an entirely new building in 1922-1923. Then in 1935-1936 a WPA program made possible an addition--an addition financed one half by the Federal government and one half by local subscriptions.

Scholastic population of the Briggs school system has fluctuated through the years. Of late economic conditions have brought about consolidations. First the Red Bud school was consolidated with the Briggs system in 1935; the Adams or Ridge school in 1936; the Mahomet school a few years later; and finally a part of the Live Oak district.

The first graduating class of the Briggs High School was that of the spring of 1919. Teachers for that year were Mr. J. C. Wright, principal, Miss Idell Miller and Mrs. J. C. Wright. Graduates were C. W. Cloud, Aline Dickens, Lessie Harton and Ruth Smith. Mr. Cloud married Lillian Jordan, later engaged in farming and ranching, then did road work for the county. He lost his life in a car wreck. Miss Dickens married Lloyd S. Smith, has a daughter married to Douglas Kirkpatrick and two grandchildren. Mrs. Smith was assistant postmaster at Bertram for a number of years. Miss Harton was in the employ of the Rural Telephone Company in both Briggs and Lampasas for upwards of thirty years. Miss Smith married Charlie Deere. Friendly and hospitable, she is remembered affectionately by everyone in Briggs who ever knew her. She and her husband live in Del Rio, Texas.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs & E.L.

TEACHERS IN THE BRIGGS SCHOOL: 1906-1960

Every effort has been made to name all of the principals and teachers in the Briggs school from the year 1905-1906, the year where Ernest Langford leaves off in his First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. We are deeply indebted to Mrs. Mae Edgar Lowe, assistant county school superintendent, Burnet, who gave so willingly of her time in helping complete this record.

YEAR	PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS*
1906-07	Robert McCann, Mabel Dennis
1907-08	Robert McCann, Mabel Dennis
1908-09	Robert McCann, Mabel Dennis
1909-10	Robert McCann, Cleo Snow
1910-11	Fred Sparks, Mamie Hilliard
1911-12	F. B. Parsons, Minnie Horn
1912-13	F. B. Parsons, Myrtle Dickson, Alta Fullwood
1913-14	F. B. Parsons, Myrtle Dickson, Alta Fullwood
1914-15	Bertha Atkinson, Leta Tarver
1915-16	Bertha Atkinson, Leta Tarver
1916-17	Eulalia Dillingham, Marion Norwood, Mae Patton
1917-18	Eulalia Dillingham, Ella Cummings, Mrs. E. B. Holly (5 Mos.), Beulah Walker (2 mos.)
1918-19	J. C. Wright, Idell Miller, Mrs. J. C. Wright
1919-20	J. C. Wright, Ella Cummings, Letty Mitcheltree
1920-21	Bonnie McFarlin, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, Bertha Russel (4 mos.), Letty Mitcheltree (4 mos.)
1921-22	W. E. Faith, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, Mrs. E. L. Eaves
1922-23	W. E. Faith, Trilba Preslar, Mrs. E. L. Eaves
1923-24	Jas. E. Box, Mrs. Jas. McFarlin, Eva Mae Bilton Thornal, Mrs. E. L. Eaves

TEACHERS IN THE BRIGGS SCHOOL: 1906-1960

1924-25	Jas. E. Box, Mrs. Oscar Preslar, Mary E. Williamson, Mr. E. L. Eaves
1925-26	A. B. Hatley, Mary E. Williamson, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, Mrs. A. B. Hatley
1926-27	Albert W. Sone, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, Mrs. J. H. E. Willman, Gladys Godwin
1927-28	Mrs. J. H. E. Willman, Gladys Godwin, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, Walter Reed, Velma Barnett
1928-29	A. P. Box, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham, Velma Barnett, Gladys Godwin, Mrs. E. L. Eaves
1929-30	A. P. Box, Gladys Godwin, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham
1930-31	A. P. Box, Joy Doak, Mr. E. L. Eaves, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham
1931-32	A. P. Box, Lovett Ledger, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham, Joy Doak, Mrs. E. L. Eaves
1932-33	Jas. E. Box, Lovett Ledger, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham, Joy Doak, Mrs. E. L. Eaves
1933-34	Jas. E. Box, Lovett Ledger, Joy Doak, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, LeRoy Thompson
1934-35	W. B. McCutcheon, LeRoy Ledger, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, Julu Lane, Dorsey Hasty
1935-36	W. B. McCutcheon, R. E. Bunker, W. B. Smith, Mrs. Dorsey Hasty, Nellie Grace DeHay, Ethel Lindsey, Mrs. E. L. Eaves
1936-37	W. B. McCutcheon, Wilma Clinkscales, Mrs. E. L. Eaves, Ruth Hasty, Nellie Grace DeHay, Ethel Lindsey, W. B. Smith, Charles Porter
1937-38	Don Johns, Ethel Lindsey, Ruth Hasty, Catherine Tyce, Nellie G. Jones, Wilma Clinkscales, Mrs. Don Johns
1938-39	Don Johns, Mrs. Don Johns, Wilma Clinkscales, Ruth Hasty, Catherine Tyce, Nellie Grace Jones, Ethel Lindsey
1939-40	Don Johns, Mrs. Don Johns, W. S. Frazier, Ethel Lindsey, Rosa Jones, William Elmer Ferguson, Wilma Clinkscales, Frank Eden

TEACHERS IN THE BRIGGS SCHOOL: 1906-1960

1940-41	W. B. Denman, Rosa Jones, Wilma Clinkscales, Floy Veard, Willie H. Hiles, Ethel McCarty, Aubery Perry, Frank Edens
1941-42	W. B. Denman, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Rosa Jones, Willis H. Hiles, Etta F. Crane, Evelyn L. Bunton
1942-43	J. N. Faith, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Ruth Hasty, Gertrude Vaden
1943-44	J. N. Faith (7 mos.), Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs (2 mos.), Gertrude Vaden, Ruth Hasty
1944-45	J. N. Faith, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Mrs. A. L. Stewart, Ruth Hasty, Mrs. T. R. Carson
1945-46	A. L. Stewart, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Effie McLeod, Ruth Hasty, Mrs. A. L. Stewart
1946-47	A. L. Stewart, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Effie McLeod, Ruth Hasty, Mrs. A. L. Stewart, J. C. Wright
1947-48	C. O. McKinney, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Ruth Hasty, Effie McLeod, J. C. Wright
1948-49	Howard Adare, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Ruth Hasty, Effie McLeod, J. C. Wright
1949-50	Howard Adare, Ruth Hasty, Effie McLeod, Charles Barton, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, J. C. Wright
1950-51	Howard Adare, Effie McLeod, Charles Barton, Ruth Hasty, J. C. Wright, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Z. L. Anderson
1951-52	Howard Adare, Ruth Hasty, Julu Hasty, Charles Barton, J. C. Wright, Effie McLeod, Wilma Clinkscales, Agnes Golembeski, E. A. Hendricks, Ethel McCarty
1952-53	Howard Adare, Wilma Clinkscales, Ruth Hasty, Julu Hasty, Ethel McCarty, McLean Knox, Clarence Phinney, Agnes Golembeski, Effie McLeod, J. C. Wright
1953-54	D. C. Stanley, Ruth Hasty, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Everett Nichols, LeRoy Ledger, Mrs. George Hindman, J. C. Wright, Effie McLeod, Julu Hasty
1954-55	D. C. Stanley, Mrs. H. A. Dufner, Arlee Barton, Everett Nichols, J. C. Wright, Wilma Clinkscales, Mrs. D. C. Stanley, James Jones, Ethel McCarty, H. A. Dufner

TEACHERS IN THE BRIGGS SCHOOL: 1906-1960

1955-56	D. C. Stanley, H. A. Dufner, J. C. Wright, Everett Nichols, Mrs. Chas. Wykes, Mrs. D. C. Stanley, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, James Jones
1956-57	J. B. Etheridge, J. C. Wright, Velma Capps, Everett Nichols, Harold Asher, Ethel McCarty, Wilma Clinkscales, Julu Hasty
1957-58	J. B. Ethridge, J. C. Wright, Velma Capps, Everett Nichols, Harold Asher, Ethel McCarty, Wilma Clinkscales, Julu Hasty
1958-59	J. B. Ethridge, Wilma Clinkscales, Ethel McCarty, Julu Hasty, Velma Capps, Max Copeland, Everett Nichols, Harold Asher, J. C. Wright, Mrs. Emma Smith, Mrs. B. J. Hammonds
1959-60	F. T. Wright, Mrs. F. T. Wright, Wilma Clinkscales, Howard Wilson, Harold Asher, Emma Smith, Julu Hasty, Ethel McCarty, Everett Nichols

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

*First named principal or superintendent, depending upon title at the time

GRADUATES OF THE BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL

The first class to be graduated from the Briggs High School was that of 1919 under the principalship of Mr. J. C. Wright. Every effort has been made to list all of the graduates from that year through 1961. If errors have been made it is because records of the early years have been hard to come by. This list was prepared by Mrs. L. S. Skaggs with the assistance of others of Briggs and the surrounding community. Principals and teachers for the various years are listed in the preceding section.

- 1919: Charlie Cloud, Aline Dickens, Lessie Harton, Ruth Smith
- 1920: Horace Clinkscales, Leone Hall, Charlie Hasty, Thomas Mallett, Bertha Russell, Lillian Taylor, Charlie Thornton
- 1921: Ora Dee Asher, Albert Cloud, Lucille Lindsey, Oma Patterson, Maurine Williams
- 1922: Ruth Hasty, Exa Preslar, Eula Russell, Jackie Taylor
- 1923: Jimmie Belvin, Marcus Patterson, Elmer Thompson, Grady Williams
- 1924: No graduates as eleventh grade was added effective this school year
- 1925: Adrian Baker, Buford Banks, Maggie Fewell, Albert Gates, Ruth Hasty, Loudell Houston, Iris Moore, Odas Moore, Alberta Preslar, Exa Preslar, Ruth Smith
- 1926: Alta Loma Baker, Florence Champlin, Blanche Dillingham, Alberta Hall, J. N. Faith, Oletha Moore, Roscoe Morgan, Herman Nichols, Irvin Reavis, Jodie Smith, Georgia Taylor, Lois West
- 1927: Louis Courtney, Edna Fraley
- 1928: Denver Adams, Lawrence Jones, Thomas Merton McCormick, Othello Pulliam, Ruby Smith
- 1929: Nona Asher, Clarence Baker, Rosa Lee Hicks, Zelma Reavis, Emma Teat, Malcolm Teat
- 1930: Carl Adams, Wade Brown, Forest Davis, Melton Fewell, Ruth Juby, Jimmie Taylor, S. A. Taylor, Catherine Tyce, Merle Watson
- 1931: Ronald Priest, Eugene Pulliam, O. C. Smith, Thelma Smith
- 1932: Bessie Champlin, Ethel Davis, Sherwood Dillingham, Troy Nichols, Elmo Priest, Jewell Smith, Juanita Smith, Anita Spencer, Ethel Spencer, Goldie Taylor
- 1933: Roy Courtney, Margaret Juby, Aleece Moore, Winifred Pulliam, Othell Taylor, *Natalie Green, Louise Carkey*

GRADUATES OF THE BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL

- 1934: Stella Baker, Vesta Champlin, Helen Juby, Taylor Smith, Maxine Stewart, Christine Taylor, Curtis Taylor, Marveline West
- 1935: Jesse Lee Bogard, Othel Braziel, Jamie Gehand, Robert Davis, Clifford Priest, Wilton Smith
- 1936: Ready Caskey, Jr., Rayma Dillingham, Ruby Lee Johnson, Frederick Juby, Una Mae Hall, Norene McAndrew, Imogene Reynolds, Hilton Smith, Mildred Stanford, Ila Mae Taylor
- 1937: Thelma Binnion, Velma Binnion, Elaine Dillingham, Iva Rue Moore, Hazelle Pulliam, Roberta Taylor, *J. T. Clark, Everett Ray Moore*
- 1938: Willard Baker, W. C. Dillingham, Dorothy Ann Greene, Anna Lois Juby, Morris Price, Dewey Lee Spencer
- 1939: Robert Bradley, Mary Evelyn Dillingham, Robert Greer, James Jones, Doris Kirkpatrick, Ruby Lee Nettleship, Dorothy Nell Pulliam, Roye Bryan Skaggs, Platte Stanford, W. T. Wooten.
- 1940: Morgan Clark, Nelda Cloud, Mildred Dixon, Lester Ervin, Edna Greer, Pearl Jones, Yates Johnson, Ruby Juby, Dorman Keele, Ruth Kimsey, Dawn Kirkpatrick, Quentin Kirkpatrick, Bryce McCormick, Billie B. Montgomery, Avon Morris, Hubert Perry, Francille Sherman, Dollie B. Smith, Merkle Williams. (This was the largest graduating class in the history of the Briggs High School.) *Mildred Jackson*
- 1941: Douglas Baker, Mary Louise Denman, Otis Ervin, Kenneth Goodwin, Billie Isbell, Earl Jones, Gloria Keele, Earlene Kelley, J. W. Langford, Ila Jean Morris, J. V. Perry, Donald Perkins, Carlos Price, O. B. Smith, Earlene Williams, J. W. Williams
- 1942: Aubrey Baker, Marxine Baker, Ruth Cloud, Ray Crooks, Jim Tom Holly, Helen Isbel, Ozias Johnson, Leota Jordan, Mildred Juby, Adaline Leifeste, Dean Millage, Carleta Mitchell, Edna Earl Perry, Pauline Roberts, Eugene Sherman, Robert Smith, Winnie Smith
- 1943: Daryl Edwards, Louis Goodwin, Pearson Howell, Mary Virginia Kirkpatrick, Wayland Lawler, Lyal McAndrew, Alberteen Reynolds, Elizabeth Sherman, Truman Wooten
- 1944: George Adams, Neyron Baker, Herschel Banks, Durwood Kelly, Noel Langford, Larry McCoy, John Richard Perkins, Daughdrill Smith, Janell Williams, Emmet Williamson
- 1945: (Twelfth grade added this year.) Yvonne Bell, Oscar Daniels, Harrold Harton, Oretha Sherman, Abe Swope, Mayme Ruth Taylor, Laura Walston

GRADUATES OF THE BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL

- 1946: Charles Caskey, Wendell Clark, Roanna Daniels, Dayton Duke, Loveta Greer, Wilbur Holly, Eldred Morris, Waymond Nutt, Jack Patterson, Glen Price, Helen Pearl Reavis, A. H. Reynolds, Hermalee Wilson.
- 1947: Dorothy Baker, Glen Black, Willie Brittain, LaGene Champlin, Roy Crooks, Clifford Davis, Joy Ruth Dillingham, Billie Goble, Wincale Jordan, Keith Langford, Carrol McCoy, Nelda Mullins, LaVerne Nettleship, Eunice Riggs, Novella Shugart, Lois Wooten
- 1948: Pennie Bell Adams, T. R. Carson, Jr., James Caskey, Zulu Daniels, Deward Montgomery, Melba Gene Morris, DeWayne Reavis, LaVon Reavis, Clifford Shugart, LaVerne Smith, Barbara Stiles, J. T. Stiles, LaWanda Wilson
- 1949: Dollie Brittain, Dayton Carpenter, Marie Crawford, JoNita Duke, Mona Ruth Heine, Ray Kelly, Marvin Perry, Jaunice Reavis, Luther Dale Reed, Duel Shed, Kenneth Shed, Elvin Smith, Laudell Stewart
- 1950: Fred Crooks, Nora Faye Daniels, H. A. Davis, Jr., Bobbie Sherman, Marlene Williams, Wanda Jean Williams
- 1951: Cora Ellen Black, Glynda Carson, Joyce Caskey, Kelse Cloud, Ruby Fox, Cora Wynell Howard, Dalton Langford, Billie Fay Reavis, Joe Mac Robinson, Mary Sherman, James David Smith, Ray Stiles, Harrell Williams
- 1952: Malcolm Carlisle, Harold Hoover, Jo Ed Porter, Ann Shelburn, Peggy Wilson
- 1953: Faylene Arnold, Jaunez Carroll, Dean Crooks, Nelda Guthrie, Fletcher Jamar, Dorothy Kelly, DeWayne McAndrew, Lovelle Morris, Cleota Reavis, Decil Reavis, DeVeda Mae Taylor
- 1954: Johnny Banks, C. C. Castleberry, Mary Cowen, Jo Ann Fox Hetzel, Thomas Jenkins, Paul Leddy, Norma McAndrew, Bob McBride, Jean Reavis, J. W. Reavis, Patricia Reavis, Shirley Shelburn, Aaron Stiles, Max Taylor
- 1955: Sarah Black, Kenneth Caskey, Katheryn Gloud, Bettie Sue Jamar, Garner Jenkins, Virginia Kendrick, Gaylon Layne, Bobby Reavis, Zoe Ella Robinson, Geraldine Smith, Harry Stewart, Jimmie Lee Williams
- 1956: Elaine Hasty, Janice Holly, Gene Lintz, Bill John McBride, Joyce LaDell Smith, Billie Earl Williams
- 1957: Donnie Davis, DeWayne Fraley, Lee Perry, Ida May Reavis, Mary Sherman, Gaylon Smith, Margaret Sunvision
- 1958: Claudette Bell, Anita Bogard, Bonnie Ferguson, LaQuinta Roberts, Ginya Waxler

GRADUATES OF THE BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL

- 1959: Don Bizzell, Glynda Caskey, Wayne Dale, Billy Wayne Kendrick, Odean Perry, John Taylor, Mike Zuniga
- 1960: Rita Cantwell, Charlene Chamberlain, Floydell Ferguson, Leanna Herring, LaQueta Morris, Ruth Nichols, Jimmy Pierce, David Reavis, Albert Sunvision
- 1961: Joe Adare, Ray Bizzell, DeWayne Bogard, Carolyn Crouch, Harry Gurno, Tommy Sealey, Charlotte Spivey, Melvin Whitley

DOLLIE HARTON'S REPORT CARD

Reproduced on this and the next page is the report card of Dollie Harton, third grader in 1912-13.

A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or touch not the Perian* spring.

BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL

1912-'13

Board of Trustees

R. A. McCann, Pres.
L. A. Ellason, Sect'y.
J. T. Hall, Treas.
M. J. Hasty
S. A. Jordan
J. W. Edgar
W. E. Clinkscales

Faculty

F. B. Parsons, Supt.-Prin.
Miss Myrtle Dickens,
First Assistant
Miss Alta Fullwood,
Primary

Report of Harton, Dollie
3rd Grade

Advertisements

Ratliff-Moore Co.
The Place to Buy Your Goods
"Get the Habit"

WE SELL
Dry Goods Groceries
Clothing
W. E. GUDE & SONS

Get Your
School Supplies From
J. T. HALL
Tablets, Inks, Pencils, etc.

C. A. BAKER & CO.
Everything in
HARDWARE

Ratliff-Lindsey Co.
General Merchandise
Dry Goods Groceries
Gents Furnishings

BRIGGS REVIEW
Printed this
REPORT CARD
Let us do your job work

(These advertisements appeared on the front and back pages. They are re-arranged here for ease in typing.)

*Let us be charitable and say that the spelling here and on the next page is the work of the printer's devil in the office of the BRIGGS REVIEW.

DOLLIE HARTON'S REPORT CARD

Subjects	Months						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Arithmetic	95	90	98				
History							
Geometry							
Laten*							
Grammar							
Phyeslogy*							
Language	90	95	95				
Physics							
Eng. Liturature*							
Am. Liturature*							
Composition							
Geography, Phy.							
Geography, Des.	90	90	89				
Civics							
Algebra							
Speller	90	95	95				
Reading	90	95	90				
Writing	90	93	90				
Days Present	19	17	14 $\frac{1}{2}$				
Days Absent	1	3	5 $\frac{1}{2}$				
Tardy	0	0	1				
Black Marks							
Deportment	98	98	98				
Rank in Class							
Drawing	98	96	96				
Agriculture							

I have examined this report.

1 Month J. T. Harton
 2 Month J. T. Harton
 3 Month J. T. Harton
 4 Month
 5 Month
 6 Month
 7 Month

SOUVENIR HOLIDAY GREETINGS: 1921

This is a Christmas greeting card for December 25, 1921. Its principal interest is that it gives us the names of school trustees and the class roll of the "Intermediate Room" for the year 1921-1922, and the name of the teacher--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs. There are also Christmas poems and a picture of the class, which is reproduced on Plate 14.

BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL
District No. 28
Burnet Co., Texas
December 25, 1921

Mrs. L. S. Skaggs
Teacher

School Officers
B. F. Lindsey, President
C. A. Baker, Secretary
G. C. Baker
J. L. Patterson
L. A. Ellason

PUPILS

Pupils in the picture are identified left to right as follows:

Eight boys in front row: Vyron Grisham, Willie Baker, Herman Nichols, Frank Hall, Marvin Wright, Thomas M. McCormick, Othello Pulliam, J. N. Faith.

Nineteen standing: Jody Smith, Lottie Fortner, Alta Loma Baker (in plaid dress); Lenora Caskey, Lois West, Alberta Hall, Ruby Smith, Mrs. Stella Skaggs, teacher; Louise Smith (in front of Mrs. Skaggs), Nona Asher (in dark dress); Blanche Dillingham (black hat), Edna Fraley, Allie Champlin (white cap), Florence Champlin (black cap); Juanita Horn (hair parted in middle), Irene Lee, Virgie Williams, Maggie Smith (light plaid dress), Jewel Melton (dark hat).

Not present when picture was made: Francis Buckner, Opal Harton, Alma McAndrew, Florence Rochester, Oma Rochester, Georgia Taylor, Hazel Whitley.

FROM THE MOONLIGHT SERENADERS TO THE HAYLOFT GANG
(It's a Heap of Fiddlin' and Singin' Aroun' Here)

(There are various reasons why an introductory paragraph or two seems appropriate to Mr. Harton's reminiscences. In the first place, when we set about finding some one who would undertake the responsibility of writing the story of the Briggs Hayloft Gang the unanimous decision was to ask him to do it. His immediate response was: "I can't write; all I can do is talk." He finally agreed to "talk to his typewriter" if we would do the editing--"Put what I do in respectable English." Well, the result is that he has "talked" for some 10,000 words--and about a lot more than the Hayloft Gang. Editing has been a simple matter--all that we have done is delete a few paragraphs where he repeated himself.

(Mr. Harton has done more than write about "fiddlin' and singin'." In his inimitable way he has caught a whole community in the act of entertaining itself--and for upwards of sixty years at that. The butcher and the baker, the carpenter and the storekeeper, the banker and the schoolteacher, and others too numerous to mention here--all, all of them, have been caught in the act of just being themselves. And we are the richer for it. He has preserved for us something of what for the want of a better name we call "community spirit"--a spirit which has enriched the lives of the people of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs throughout its entire history.)

* * *

As far back as I can remember it has been Briggs--a little town in the eastern part of Burnet County, some fifty miles north of Austin. Prior to that it was Taylor's Gin--and before that Gum Springs.

To the north, east and west lie miles and miles of fine grazing land and beautiful timber. To the south, southeast and southwest lie thousands of acres of wonderful farm land, once known as the Briggs Blackland Prairie. And it was black! The road south from Briggs was so bad in wet weather that it was impossible to travel it for weeks during the winter time when we had our long rainy spells. If we had a good season, and our rains came in time, we could always count on a bale of cotton per acre. Our gins were humming day and night in the fall of the year.

Since we always had a fair cattle and wool crop, we had a busy little town. Around the old blacksmith shop, barbershop, drugstore, and most anywhere on the streets, you could hear about any kind of a "tale" that you wanted to listen to. When crops were good, everybody was happy; and you certainly could get all the entertainment that you craved by spending the day in Briggs.

O, yes, we had our troubles too, our heartaches, sorrows and disappointments; but if there ever was a place on this earth that shared them all together this has been the one little community that did just that. Of course we know that all small communities are a lot the same in this respect, but being here and knowing some of the things that have been done brings a realization of just how helpful folks can be to others in time of need. When a neighbor lost

FROM THE MOONLIGHT SERENADERS TO THE HAYLOFT GANG(It's a Heap of Fiddlin' and Singin' Aroun' Here)

his barn or house by fire, everyone helped him out willingly. When he returned from the hospital after an illness, his crop would be plowed out. If you have ever had these things to happen to you you know just how close to your heart these people will always remain.

But I am supposed to be writing about things that have happened around here in the way of entertainment. I am sure that from time to time I shall wander away from my subject, but just try and bear with me and I will do the best I can to stay somewhere close to it.

The first entertainment that I have been able to find out anything about in the way of music started in the early 1880s. Of course, from the very first time that we can remember, we have heard the older folks talking about the old-time spelling matches, the old square dances, candy pullings, and singings. From a good friend of mine, Marvin (Piney) West (deceased), I quote the following:

Around 1886-87 Uncle Will Griffin was considered a mighty good fiddler in those days. Uncle Bill McVay played the guitar and Aunt Mary Griffin was the organist, and a good one. There was also a quartet (unable to remember names) that did a lot of entertaining around this community. It seems that they were in demand at all or almost all the gatherings such as play parties, school entertainments, etc.

Around 1895-1900 the Moonlight Serenaders were very popular in and around this little community. On beautiful moonlight nights in the good old summer time a group of boys and girls--all good musicians and singers--would get together with their instruments and go from house to house singing and playing till around midnight. The neighbors would get out of bed and serve them cake or cookies. Most likely these cookies were what we called tea-cakes. They'd serve coffee or whatever they had handy. Among these entertainers were such folks as Ernest Goodloe, Bob Kirk, Mattie Baker (who later became Mrs. Bob Kirk), Marvin West, Beulah Goodloe (who later became Mrs. Marvin West), Earl Woodbury, and many, many others. Most old-timers remember Elbie Wooten at the piano, Charlie Warden as fiddler, and Dewey Smith with his mandolin.

At about this time Mr. Mark Langford, a good bass singer of his time, organized a mixed quartet of two ladies and two men and did a lot of singing, mostly sacred songs. Mr. Langford was the father of Ernest Langford, who has aroused a lot of interest in writing the past history of our community.

Mr. W. G. Ireland, at one time a photographer here, made a lot of good photographs of these different groups. Some of these pictures were published in our local newspaper, The Briggs Enterprise, along with write-ups. Another paper printed later was The Briggs Review. Joe Williams was also a good photographer and could do about anything else you might mention. He too made

FROM THE MOONLIGHT SERENADERS TO THE HAYLOFT GANG(It's a Heap of Fiddlin' and Singin' Aroun' Here)

some good pictures of these groups, and of others such as those who put on some of those good old home-talent plays. Plays such as "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" staged at Briggs deserved to be photographed; they were excellent. Uncle Joe Williams was also a trick photographer. One of his pictures was of a man holding a bale of cotton above his head and the same man sitting on top of the bale of cotton. (This picture is still in existence.) He also ingeniously put together a man sitting in a chair inside a small-mouth quart bottle. With tweezers, twine, and other aids he had glued this man and chair together piece by piece after having whittled him out of pine!

Good old summer time! Picnics, singing schools, protracted meetings--I'll never forget pallets in the aisles, babies asleep, the old kerosene torch lights with bugs of every kind swarming all around them; the wonderful singing and preaching, the testifying for our Creator that took place out under that old "brush arbor." I am sure that there was a difference then as now in belief. In fact, I know that there was because I also remember the hot debates, but yet I am glad that I don't remember very much about them. I was so small that everything seemed in perfect harmony and that is the way I want to remember it.

The old Primitive Baptist Association--everybody was there with food enough for an army, tents stretched all over the ground, preachers by the dozen, and every last one of them got a chance to speak his piece. They always picked a good shady place with tall trees and an old brush arbor was built of the native trees about. There were foot-washing, shouting, good singing--if you ask me, it was a pretty good place to be.

At Christmas time in our little town the men folks would go to the country and bring in a big cedar tree so tall that it would reach the ceiling of the old church building. Then the ladies would take over and decorate the tree for two or three days. When it was finished you would see a beautiful sight. Then came the night of the "tree." The house was full and there was a present of some sort for everybody regardless of age, grade, or class. Needless to say there was also a wonderful program of music, singing, and pieces. Those were good, good old days.

The old time square dances! Yes, I can remember a few of them, the music and how those callers could call and keep everyone to their places. Tom Whitley and Charlie Baker were "out of this world" when it came to calling for an old-time square dance.

Play parties were an entertainment meant for the young folks, but everyone had fun getting together. It was more or less understood, however, that the old folks, especially those over twenty-five or thirty should stay out of the parlor. What a time those boys and gals would have playing drop-the-handkerchief, snap, spin-the-pan, winkem, and many other games.

There was something going on all the time throughout the lean years and the good ones. About once a month there would be a good program of some kind or

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another at the schoolhouse. Home-talent plays were the usual fare with some real good in-between acts or skits. Uncle Bill McDaniel with some of his recitals of his own composition. Poetry was his mainstay, and believe you me he could really write and recite. For instance, "The Sinking of the Titanic" and many others of his would make some of these modern poems take a back seat. You couldn't hear any better.*

John Patterson used to preach his "negro sermons" all blacked up with his big bow tie on. It looked and sounded real; in fact, it became so real that John quit. He told me that one night he was in a big way, right in the middle of one of his sermons, when all at once he began to get happy. He said he never felt so funny in all his life, like he was floating in the air. After that, John never would preach any more of his sermons. He felt like maybe the Good Lord was speaking to him about mockery or something.

I guess it is a good thing that we didn't have television back in those days because we wouldn't have had time for it. For with the Forks-of-Rocky swimmin' hole, chicken roosts, peach orchards, calf riding and roping, baseball games, glee clubs--well, just about anything that you could think of, we had it.

Uncle Billy Williams liked to tell a good one on Mr. Walter Rountree about his surveying. Uncle Billy said that they were out surveying land, when some fellows walked up asking all kinds of questions about the instruments. Finally one asked Mr. Rountree if metal, steel, tin, iron, silver and so forth would cause the needle to go to one side or the other. Mr. Rountree replied, "Well, yes, boys, or enough greenback will cause it."

Uncle Fred Wooten, another character whom we will never forget, could really spin the yarns. Some traveling people had stopped to get some ice to make a cold drink of water. It was in July and, boy, it was hot. Uncle Fred ran the ice house. In the conversation the folks were talking about a drought going on in West Texas, their home. When they finished, they asked Uncle Fred when we had had rain here at Briggs, "Well, boys, we've got bullfrogs here three or four years old thet don't even know how to swim."

Sanford (Dock) Williams, who still lives here in Briggs, has told some good ones on Arkansas. Dock is well past eighty years now and back around 1900 came here from Scott County, Arkansas. Here is one of his tales.

Dock says that old Aunt Mary Morgan would get pretty much out of sorts at the young folks if they got too rowdy or made too much fuss on Sundays. She would call them together and with all seriousness would say to them, "The Good Book said to keep the Sabbath holy and celebrate the Fourth of July."

Nor will we ever forget old Hillary Williams, one of the best singers of folk songs that I have ever heard. Hillary had a job cleaning and sweeping the Woodmen Hall on Saturdays before lodge night. We boys would always be after

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Hillary to sing for us, so he made a deal with us. We would go to the hall and get out the brooms. Hillary would park himself in a big easy chair; we did the sweeping and Hillary did the singing. One song that he would always sing for us that paid for all the sweeping we ever did was "My Heart's Tonight in Texas by the Silvery Rio Grande."

Every Sunday afternoon all the town boys would head for Lee Nichols'. Lee was one of the best guys that I ever knew. He was always a boy right along with us; he always had a lot full of milk calves. We would spend all Sunday afternoon riding calves. Boy! What a time we had!

Pomeroy and Hastings Smith ran the drugstore. That was the hangout for all the boys. Pomeroy said that if we would all chip in, we could buy a radio and set it up there in the drugstore. Best I can remember, the thing cost about three hundred and fifty dollars. I know the old gooseneck speaker cost over a hundred dollars. Well, we had it set up. They always had a good fire going in the winter time and we would stay in the old drugstore lots of nights till three in the morning. The Night Hawks from Kansas City would come on around two in the morning and we would wait up to hear them. I always will believe that Pomeroy got sick of that trade.

Another hangout for us boys was Perry and Mattie's cafe--Perry and Mattie Godwin ran a cafe in Briggs. They were the best people to kids that I have ever known. On cold, bad nights, when they knew that we were going out and steal some chickens, they would tell us to just bring them down there and cook them so we wouldn't be out in the cold. We would get the chickens, bring them back to the cafe, pull down all the shades and have a time cooking and eating those chickens. This may not belong under the heading of entertainment, but to us "kids" it was entertainment.

Then our little town was booming. We had good cotton crops; there was plenty of work for everybody. Every day of the week the town was full of people. Our little town was growing. You could buy almost anything that you might happen to need in Briggs. The road shows were coming regularly and some mighty good entertainment they were. Then one of these shows came and stayed--the "Humphries Brothers" was its name. It seems like they had begun to break up and quit the road about the time that they came to Briggs so they just stayed around for awhile. John, the oldest of the brothers, bought the local newspaper, which he ran for some time. Cecil and the late Cleve Pulliam put in a theater, one of the best in the country at that time. They ran good pictures and had a thriving business for years. Jess, Olen, Clyde and Claude (the twins), who were jugglers and tight-wire walkers, scattered to neighboring towns. Although they never went back to show business, they were always ready and willing to help the community out with home-talent shows of all kinds. Cecil for years acted as our master of ceremonies on our Saturday nite amateur shows here in Briggs. In 1928, Jess on the fiddle and Cecil on the guitar, went to Harlingen, Texas, where they played and won the state-wide championship. It is still a yearly event called the State Old Fiddler's Contest. Later they did some recording for the OK Recording Company. Some of

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the records are still to be found in the community. Remember Raggedy Ann Rag, Sweet Bunch of Daisies, Twelfth Street Rag, and many other! They were good. Cecil also won jig dancing contests all over the state.

Then came the time for everyone to begin to get interested in home-talent plays. Mr. J. C. Wright had come to Briggs to teach school. He was always ready to try anything that was upbuilding and good for the community. Mr. and Mrs. Wright started home-talent plays. Mr. Wright always said that it was just as easy to get up a good play as a sorry one, so we didn't consider anything short of a royalty play. We usually ordered Charles Harrison plays and paid a royalty of twenty-five dollars for the first showing, then twelve-fifty for each following performance. A lot of times the plays were so good that they would have to be played the second time. POPULAR-DEMAND! A lot of these plays were staged at our neighboring towns with real good attendance. We were always blessed with some of the best characters that could be found anywhere; in fact, several of them could have been professional if they had wished to follow the show business. One play that I shall always remember that was directed by Mr. Wright was "The Awakening of John Slater." The characters in this play were: Mr. Wright, John Smith, Arthur Hickman, Odas Moore, Horace Clinkscales, Lessie Harton, Maurine Williams, and many others. When this play was staged in Briggs the first time, the receipts were \$139.40. By popular demand, it was played the second time bringing in receipts of \$139.15. Price of admission was only fifteen cents and twenty-five cents. This same play was also staged in Florence, Bertram, Andice and Burnet.

When you think of country things and entertainment you think of box suppers, ice cream parties, country dances, hayrides and picnics. These things bring back fond memories and the people who participated in them won't soon be forgotten. Back in the early twenties Ray and Roy Scott lived here in Briggs and at that time we were having a lot of country dances. Ray played the guitar and Roy played the mandolin and a lot of other musicians joined in and played for dances and other community gatherings. A lot of people who didn't dance drove for miles just to hear the boys play. They were also good singers as well as musicians, and sang a lot at "play parties," as we called them.

Believe me, we have had our share of talent around this little place called Briggs, and we still do. We think we have some of the best; in fact, we are just getting started telling some of the things about talent in this little country town.

In the late twenties we lost our bank. One morning, all out of the blue sky, the news came like a bolt of lightning--the Briggs State Bank was closed--moved in the still of the night to Florence to join the two banks there to establish the Union State Bank.

Then--the big fire! A fire that wiped out over half the town in one night. It started in the Ratliff-Moore Company general store. Next the drugstore, then like a line of stacked dominoes Caskey's barbershop, Baker's hardware

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store, which also housed Binnion's meat market, all went down in flames. The rock building, the old bank building, halted the flames, but the very heart and soul of Briggs had been reduced to a mass of smouldering ruins.

Right after the fire came the depression. Stack enough of these things together and it can get a little discouraging and bothersome. But this bunch around Briggs was never the kind to say "uncle" so they all began to talk about doing something about it.

Everyone pitched in and helped clear away the rubbish and clean off the lots. It looked like it was a mile from the bank building to Lindsey's store as the fire had wiped everything clean in between these two places. We still had the B. F. Lindsey Co., the S. R. Dillingham general store, J. T. Hall cafe and confectionery, the W. E. Clinkscales grocery and post office, T. R. Carson's garage, Baker Brothers' garage (Link and Lee), Hickman and Lee's grocery and meat market, the H. L. Wade cafe, the A. W. Stewart blacksmith shop, Harton's barbershop, Pulliam's Magnolia station and the Sinclair service station.

S. R. Dillingham built a Texaco station north of his store. Arthur Hickman sold his store to John Moore and took over the Texaco station. Then John Binnion built a building and reopened his meat market. Then Mr. Caskey built his barbershop back. All this was a definite come-back but there was no doubt about it--the depression was bearing down upon us in full swing--no work--no business. So we all decided to call a meeting and see if we couldn't at least stir up a little excitement and diversion.

Someone suggested that we build a platform, or stage, out under the stars and have a program of some kind every Saturday night during the summer months. Everything was to be amateur, using our own talent in and around our community so we named it the Briggs Open Air Amateur Show. We didn't have any trouble as far as home talent was concerned as we had volunteers, sometimes a month ahead.

Well, we just didn't have sense enough to throw up our hands and quit. So we decided that we would all get together and try to cheer up the situation a bit. We called a meeting and decided to build a platform out on Bob Dillingham's vacant lot and have a free amateur show every Saturday night.

Bob Dillingham said he had some old lumber that we could use to build the platform. Denver (Ky) Adams promised to do all the posthole digging, but Arnold Dixon and Fay Shields wound up finishing them. Snow Skaggs, Ernest Eaves, Jess (Casey) Williams, Virgil (Skill) Williams, Carl (Peaches) Adams, Marvin (Peg) Williams, L. W. (Laudy) Stewart, Marvin (Piney) West, Harry (Fessor) Horn, Bryan Skaggs, John Binnion, Milt Cehand, Lamar Hickman, Elmer Thompson--all of these did the carpenter work, flunking, or carrying water. Charlie Hasty was always, and still is, our Jack-of-all-trades. He'll try anything after everybody else has given up. He got himself some old ducking,

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ran it through the wash, sewed it together and made a back curtain. On this curtain he painted a sign: "Free Open Air Amateur Show Every Saturday Night."

Well, next, in order to live up to the sign that Charlie had painted, we had to get out and find some talent to put on the show. About all we had was a barbershop quartet, made up of just whoever happened to be handy whenever we felt like a tune needed to be rendered. There was the whole gang: Marvin Williams, Odas Moore, Laudy Stewart, Johnny Williams, Charlie Hasty, Grady Williams, Carl Stewart, Elmer Thompson, Bryon Hickman, Lamar Hickman. Just most any of this bunch, in case we needed it, could get by with any part.

Then we had old Eldie McDaniel with us nearly every Saturday night. Old Eldie was the jig-dancingiest thing you ever saw. He would have to dance three or four times during the show. The crowd really got a kick out of old Eldie's dancing.

Over Joppa way we heard of Uncle Henry Ray (deceased), an old-time fiddler. Also his son, Jap Ray, who still lives at Joppa, played the mandolin or the guitar with his dad. We contacted them and they came and helped us with the show. They were plenty good.

Also, we had with us many times an old-time fiddler who I have always said could play more old-time tunes than any fiddler I have ever heard. I'll guarantee that he could play all night and not play the same tune twice. I am speaking of none other than Uncle Mack Stewart, since deceased.

Another old-time fiddler who could play any tune that you could mention was J. B. (Jim) Harton (deceased). He helped us put on the show and later moved to Andice and organized a free show there.

The Courtney brothers put on one of the best acts that we had on the show. They played and sang some of the best songs you ever listened to. One I'll never forget was "The Cumberland Mountains." Ray played the mandolin, Ralph the guitar. They were always in demand, traveling usually with some political speaker.

The Humphries brothers, Jess and Cecil, at that time had just gotten back from the Valley (Harlingen) where they had just played in a state-wide fiddler's contest. They had won the state championship and had signed a contract with the O. K. Recording Company to make records. They recorded some fine old tunes. They helped us out a lot on the show. Jess came up to help us real often as he was living at Liberty Hill. Cecil (now deceased) acted as master of ceremonies and made an excellent one.

Uncle Wes (A. W.) Horn carried off the prize one night when he came down to the show ground with a fiddle that he had made himself. I wonder whatever became of that fiddle; I would sure like to see it again. It had a body something like a regular fiddle, only more on the box type. It had a pretty short

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neck in one end of the thing. Coming out of the body was a stick, and on the end of this stick there was a wheel with a handle on it. You turned this wheel and pressed on the buttons up where the keyboard ordinarily would be on a regular fiddle. This wheel was made of a hard wood; rosin was put on the wheel, just as you would put rosin on the bow. The strings and the wheel would come in contact and therefore a tone; then, as you pressed the buttons in different positions you would get your tune. Well, Uncle Wes could play a tune or two on this thing--believe it or not.

F. E. (Uncle Frank) Beach was another one of our entertainers in the later years of the show. Uncle Frank played the accordion, and played it good, for a fellow his age. He was also a big booster for the show.

Mrs. Alice Skaggs also played the accordion, and believe me, she was a booster. She was always, as far back as I can remember, in any community activity if it were worthwhile.

Mrs. Letty Perkins was always one of the best characters we had in our home-talent plays. She was also a great help in our show and a constant community booster.

Lydia Mae Grisham, like Mrs. Perkins, was also a booster and worked hard to keep plenty of talent for the show. Lydia Mae's sister and husband from Austin came up several times and helped us. They were good singers, and we really did enjoy having them help. They were Mr. and Mrs. Don Jennings. Woodrow Thomas, a brother, played a mighty good fiddle and helped us a lot.

Do you remember Mrs. Carrol Smith and her children? Mrs. Smith was a good singer, and did she have those kids trained! They could really sing those good old gospel songs. It was about the sweetest thing you ever heard, how they would come in with their parts, just right.

Well, there was the lady who always made us feel like a million dollars with her write-ups. She was always on the job with a bunch of good ideas and suggestions, and I mean good ones, always ready and willing to help in any way that she could. Yeah, you already had it guessed--"Miss Stella" we always called her--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs.

We had political talks till "who laid the chunk." Sometimes it would be a way past midnight when we broke up to go home. It got to the point where we had to let each office-seeker have just so many minutes. Of course, we always tried to arrange it so that all the speaking wouldn't come together. We would try to have a fiddle tune or two or some singing following each speaker. That kept the crowd a little more pacified. Our little community had the pleasure of hearing some wonderful speeches by men seeking offices from the lowest service to the highest in the great state of Texas, the governorship.

We had some wonderful times out at the old platform, and just had enough variety so that everybody there couldn't help but see and hear a little of something they liked.

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A couple of old-timers whom we really enjoyed were none other than William Cowen and Zolias (Zip) Bell, two old-time fiddlers who came from over Oakalla way. They were here nearly every show night for a long time and everyone certainly enjoyed their fiddlin' and singin'. They could play any old-time breakdown and sing a gospel hymn all at the same time and never get mixed up a bit. They would always come out just right. They were both getting along in years, but they were good entertainers. Mr. Cowen was blind.

In 1936 came the Texas Centennial. Texas was one hundred years old; and Texas like, we had to do a lot of braggin' and such like. All over the state, celebrations were in order. The big Centennial in Dallas was in progress and of course, since Dallas was just two hundred miles away, we had to have a little hand in the "dish." Lampasas decided on a horse race. Well, at that time, old Leck Roberts (our Houn' Man) was farming up on Rocky Creek. He was in the field plowing when he heard about this horse race. Well, Leck just took his old mare out from the plow, went to Lampasas and entered the race. And of course Leck won. He rode into Dallas in 38 hours 34 minutes from Lampasas, the starting place. When Leck got back naturally we had to pull a big show. So Leck brought the old mare over the following Saturday night and we had a big free show. Judge I. G. Story was a pretty good "spieler" so we put him on the mare and all during the show he rode all over town and sold pictures of Leck and his mare. Leck is our champion houn' man, and lives at Oakalla.

The only wedding that we ever had on the old free show platform was performed by the minister H. W. (Red) McClish. The "victims" were Sepha Millage and Carl Adams. The marriage ceremony was witnessed by some fifteen hundred friends and relatives. It was about the grandest thing that we ever had on the old platform. Those kids were about the cutest things ever. Of course, they were a little bit excited, but they were real sports. And I guess old Red must have done a pretty good job of tying the knot because these kids are now living at Georgetown and have three of the sweetest young'uns you'll find anywhere. It took old Milt Cehand and Odas Moore a full month to talk "Peaches" into this as we knew he was just a little shy. "Peaches" and Sepha were both real sports so they finally agreed. Everything went off lovely and today they both can say they were the only ones to ever get "hitched" on the Old Open Air Show Platform! This marriage ceremony happened on the night of Saturday, November 4, 1933.

Memories! Those old free show days and what "pickles" we would get into sometimes! But, somehow, we would always wiggle out of our jams. Lots of times at sundown we wouldn't know who was coming in the way of talent, but when show time came we would find out that old Milt Cehand, Georgie Dillingham, or some of the boys, had got out and rustled up some acts for the night. It would always be good. No trouble at all. After the show got started someone would come up with a good speech, song, dance, or what have you. We always had some sort of entertainment to fall back on. Sometimes to fill in while we got another act ready, we'd even let a local politician make a short speech to try to drum up a few votes. Anyone knows how funny that can be at times.

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We never paid an entertainer a dime; the best reason was that we didn't have anything to pay with. However, in a case or two we did advance a dollar or so to some of the boys who lived a good way off for gasoline money. Wonderful musicians, dancers and singers appeared on our shows from all over the country. An undertaking such as this has never been equaled.

Here is another act with plenty of talent that I would like to recall. Back when Mrs. Dorsey (Tex) Hasty (now deceased) was a teacher in our school she organized a group of tap dancers, more or less for exercise and pastime. Velma didn't expect anything special out of any of them as she was only teaching them during the day when they would have a little time away from their lessons. Well, the first thing she knew, some of those kids were doing things that surprised her. A group of four had worked themselves up an act that was simply beautiful, had them some costumes made, and believe me, those girls were in demand everywhere. They were Dean Millage, Leota Jordan, Lynette Spencer, and Johnnie Merle Nichols.

The Roberts brothers at different times have also been a great help. Arlie and Buck, the older ones, were instrumental in the beginning of the Open Air Amateur Show. Eldon and Carlton were just a shade young at that time but later have come in with a "bang." These fine boys are good musicians, and since the old days have had them a good fiddle band--The Rhythmeers. They have played over several states and on a number of radio stations.

A lot of the older folks will remember the famous Stamps quartet and other quartets, musicians and singers from far and near, who at different times have come by and appeared on our amateur program.

Another thing that a lot of the older ones will remember. About sundown you would see an old model "T" Ford drive down the street and hear a cowbell ringing. It would make a round or two over the town, then pull up and stop down in front of the platform on the show lot. Well, that was Uncle Pleas (P. J.) Favors, coming to town for the free show. His son Goerge would unload his old cane bottom chair just as close to the platform as he could put it and P. J. would sit right there until the show was over. Lots of times that would be past midnight, because if we had a lot of entertainment we would use it a all. We didn't pay very much attention to what time of night it was. I am sure that at this time Uncle Pleas was in his nineties but he would always stay until the show was over. To see this grand old pioneer enjoy himself made all feel the work and effort was well worthwhile.

Another big booster for the show was H. J. (Henry) McGuire. He would never miss a show--if old Eldie was going to jig dance. I have heard him say time and again that he had rather see old Eldie dance than to see the Ringling & Barnum Bailey Circus.

Of course old Johnny Williams is still on the show. He always will be part of the Hayloft Gang; he was with us right from the start. Johnny, during our first years, had to miss a few shows as he was in Dallas for two six-weeks

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courses with the Stamps School of Music. By the way, at that time, Johnny happened to buddy with the late popular Jimmie Rodgers. It was Jimmie who got Johnny to yodeling, of which he still does a wonderful job. Also, Johnny plays the harmonica like nobody's business. We always felt like the show would be a success if we could get Johnny and his two daughters, Janice and Jo Ann, to contribute their best numbers as the whole family are good singers. From the start Johnny has been one of the most agreeable "cusses" on the show, always doing his part and never a grumble even if it meant giving his place to a visiting entertainer. He forgets sometimes, so we just call him "Lost John."

L. W. (Laudy) Stewart, one of the old-time charter members of the Hayloft Gang, has been one of the hardest workers on the show. Laudy has at different times traveled many miles and has gone to lots of trouble to make the show just a little better, never tiring or paying any attention to time and expense. He plays the guitar and is an excellent bass singer. Also, Laudy is a good "Toby" and master of ceremonies.

Marvin (Peg) Williams, another charter member from the start back in the early thirties, now lives at Georgetown. Peg plays the guitar and is a good singer--always on hand to help in any way he could to make a better show. Peg and a "partner" did a little duet work on Radio Station K-U-T in Austin back about 1933. You could hardly pick up the station beyond the city limits. Peg was a honey, and unless you have heard him recite "The Face on the Bar-room Floor" or "The Girl With the Blue Velvet Band," you just haven't heard anything.

Grady Williams, another good bass singer, was always ready to do anything you might call on him for, from a speech to a leading part in a home-talent play. Grady was always ready to be sure that "the show must go on."

Fred Reavis (deceased), like old Eldie McDaniel, was always ready to get out on the platform and jig dance or act out a skit for a good laugh.

At that time a "drifting vagabond" came to our little community, the best one-man entertainer that I have ever met. We knew this man as Dick Richardson. He drifted into town one summer afternoon. The boy with him told some of the boys that Dick could pick a guitar and sing. Harton's barbershop always kept a guitar around, so the boys brought Dick up to try him out. That was about three o'clock in the afternoon. We closed the shop the next morning about four o'clock. He was tops on that guitar and also a wonderful singer. He stayed around about two years and while he was here we played a date at the Old Settlers Reunion at Round Rock with the Dixie Land Band. This band was the Humphries Brothers and, of course, we brought back the blue ribbon--first place.

We remember some wonderful plays that were directed by Mr. J. C. Wright back in the early 1920s. Books were ordered for some noted play that Mr. Wright had read about. He and others would read the play over and pick characters

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for each part. Then they would get together and pool their thoughts. In fact, they'd go into every little detail such as talk to their prospective characters or have them to read the play. Then they'd start to work. They wouldn't even consider spending any time on anything except royalty plays. Some of the characters in these plays were: Lessie Harton, Maurine Williams, Letty Mitcheltree, Arthur Hickman, Oma Patterson Carson, Odas Moore, Lee Baker, Leona Hall Ellason, Marveline and Lois West. Other A-1 characters were Jackie Taylor, Marvin Ellason, Horace Clinkscales, Charlie Hasty, Link Baker, Lillian Taylor, Marvin Williams, Grady Williams, Carl Stewart, Velma Taylor, Charlie Thornton, John Smith, and Laudy Stewart. Some old-timers will recall that the first play staged in the new school building was "Light House Nan" with Leona Hall, Edwin Harton, Marvin Ellason and Lessie Harton in some of the character parts. Later many plays were directed by Mrs. Maud Pulliam, assisted by Ruth Dillingham, for the benefit of the Parent-Teacher Association. Others who lost a lot of sleep in training and messing with this greenhorn bunch, a-trying to teach them how to act, were Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham, Lovette Ledger, and other teachers such as Don Johns.

Well, we come now to a few happenings that a lot of young'uns can remember. We thought back there when we lost our bank, had the big fire, then following that the depression, and all nearly starved to death--we thought we were having trouble--no--no, we just thought so. We found out a little bit later what real trouble is. Of course, we all remember and always will remember that morning of December 7, 1941. The years to follow were terrible. Our boys all gone and the little town was in darkness every night. Everybody's heart was sick. There was nowhere to go and nobody would have gone if there had been someplace to go. This was a blue little community if there ever was one. I believe that I can safely say that our boys from this community while overseas in army camps away from home didn't miss a half dozen get-togethers all the time they were away. Unless it was a bond drive or something of that sort, we just didn't have any shows, plays, or community gatherings. Of course, we know that we are not any different from any other little community in the good old U. S. A. They were exactly the same way we were, all heart-broken and praying for the terrible war to come to an end so our boys could come home.

We come now to the year of 1945! August 14 was the surrender of Japan! Things were looking better because our boys were coming home. Folks just naturally began to take on a little more community spirit. Well, we began to talk up a little fiddlin' and singin'. We started gathering at homes around the countryside just sorta for our own pleasure. Musicians all around the country heard about us meeting and fiddlin' now and then. Well, it wasn't long until we started having such crowds of people to hear us practice that we started meeting at the schoolhouse so we would have more room. Then there came on the Red Cross drives, polio drives and community chest drives! There was always a demand for a program for some needy cause.

Floyd Ferguson was with us back at the beginning of the organization and at the end of World War II he started playing with us again. Floyd has won a

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number of old-time fiddling contests and is a real fiddler. He also has a son, Buddy, who is going to catch up with him if he doesn't look out. Floyd's dad was a good old-time fiddler also and has played with us on several occasions.

Herman Smith (deceased) played with us back in the old free show days. Jud and Herman played the fiddle and guitar on the old open air platform. Jud isn't half bad on the harmonica either.

Mrs. John Langford (deceased) also played the fiddle on the old show. She could play a breakdown just like a man. Everyone really enjoyed her music and drove many a mile to hear her play.

The W. H. Layne family all along since the beginning of this amateur entertainment has been a great help to us. Julu ("Judy Lou from Gum Springs" is her name on the show) has always carried the part of the old-time country girl with the community gossip. She is the "pepper" of the show. She not only entertains the audience but keeps everyone on the stage tickled so that they don't know half of the time what's coming next. She is a wonderful person with never a gripe, always ready to do her best at anything the job may be. She does a lot of typing on script, works on curtain background scenes, sings comedy songs, sweeps the stage, or just anything to make a better show. By profession Judy Lou is a school teacher and a good one, community spirited, holds a handful of "sheepskins" and entitled to all of them.

Iva Rue (Tug), a sister, and one of the "sweetest" gals you ever met, is sorta show-minded too. She is one of the best home-talent characters you ever saw on the stage, full of fun, always in a good humor, just one of those persons who makes the world a better place to live in. She has time and again worked her daylights out on our home-talent plays, never a grumble, didn't receive a penny for it, and still doesn't think anybody owes her even a "Thank you."

Eugenia, "Genie," one of the Layne sisters, was on the road most of the time with some professional show, because she was "professional"--no joke! Genie has done a lot of different acts for this place at different times. Any time she is around she is more than glad to help us with our troubles. She can sing, dance and also play that old backwoods gal from way back in the sticks. She has spent a number of years on the Harley Sadler shows and other shows of fame throughout this country.

Last, but not least, even if she is the baby sister of these girls, is Mary Layne--THE ROBERT RIPLEY BELIEVE IT OR NOT GIRL. Ripley pictured "Mary Layne Sits On Her Own Head" and "Mary Layne Walks 250 Yards Upside Down." Mary has traveled the United States over and over to say nothing of Canada and Mexico. At seven Mary traveled with her uncle, Levy Layne and family, being billed as "The Layne Trio with The Texas Wonder Girl." Later she traveled with a well-known group of entertainers for the Majestic Circuit of theaters. Like many others, Mary was always ready to help us in any way she could on these amateur

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shows, even though she was a professional actress. It just didn't ever go to the gal's head; she was just a plain old country gal and always will be.

These girls were all born and reared at Florence, our neighboring town just ten miles down the road. All were wonderful girls--two of them in "lapses of judgment" married Briggs boys. Julu happened to meet up with Charlie Hasty and just couldn't get away from him so she just finally married him. Iva Rue (Tug) also happened to something just as bad, or maybe even worse, when she met Odas Moore. I don't feel too sorry for Tug because I did my "dead level best" to talk her out of this mistake, but I couldn't seem to get anywhere with talk. So, I finally just told her to go on and marry him. She did, poor gal. Well, so much for that. They have always been "tops" with us and always will be, all of the family.

Carl Stewart, another old-timer, has worked his daylights out on this amateur show all for "free" and was glad to do it. Carl played the fiddle back in the old days, and I mean played it! Carl happened to have an accident in West Texas while working at a gin some years ago, cutting his fiddling fingers pretty badly. This didn't keep him from being valuable to us as he spent most of his time helping us emcee, working with advertising, planning hand bills, helping on the program committee work, or setting up the public address system. He can still play the fiddle but doesn't think that he can.

Merle Stewart, Carl's wife, is as everyone on the show will agree, the most patient and hardest worker we have ever known. That girl has a full-time job getting the right pitch to all the singers' songs, working out the correct time, and all that. Each singer expects Merle to do this whether she has ever even heard the songs, and believe it or not, she does just that. Merle is tops--she can play that piano like nobody's business; she is also an excellent singer as she can sing any part.

We started having benefit shows to raise money for needy things. There was McClosky hospital full of boys away from home and sick. They needed some good old country entertainment so we started taking a show over there now and then. The ladies would cook up a lot of homemade cookies and cakes and we would grease up the old fiddles and take off. The boys in McClosky never suffered from the lack of food and professional entertainers. They had plenty of shows every week, but what they really wanted was good old country folks who would come in with something down to earth. They were tired of professional entertainers without that good old homefolks spirit. They were also tired of store-bought cookin'. So we did our best to give them a feeling that they were among folks just like their folks back home. They seemed to enjoy every minute we were there and always wanted us to come back as often as we could make it.

We were just getting started good one night in the middle of one of our practice sessions on the front porch of Harton's barbership when up drove a lady and a gentleman who stopped and asked us if we would mind if they joined in. Of course we were glad to have them. The lady was none other than Mrs. Lillie

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Lee Baker, one of Texas' outstanding square dance callers. The gentleman was Henry Hudson, one of Texas' champion old-time fiddlers. Well, it was past midnight before we finished that session! And before they had left we had promised them that we would be down to help them play for the inauguration of Governor Beauford H. Jester. Well, we went and had a wonderful time. Met the governor, his wife and his mother.

Floyd Ferguson, the same old Floyd we spoke of in the old open air free show days, was also with us on this "comeback deal." Floyd worked for the railroad people in Houston for many years but he's moved back with us to stay. Floyd is a good fiddler and there is talent galore in his family. Judy and Floydell play the piano and sing and "Buddy" has made a wonderful musician. Floyd and Mrs. Ferguson sing beautifully together. They have music for breakfast, dinner and supper. We are lucky to have such fine musicians in our community.

Johnny Williams, the same Johnny that we spoke of in the early part of this mess and the free show days, is still with us and going as strong as ever. But--let's tell more about those sweet girls of Johnny's. They are a pair of the best gals you would want to know. Boy! They do a real job of singing--any form you want to mention. They can do trios with their daddy, or duets, or single out for solos. Alma, Mrs. Johnny Williams, is also raising a pair of cute boys that you will hear a lot about later. In fact, one of them is already showing talent for the mandolin.

Other people who have contributed to the success of the Hayloft programs include Laudy Stewart, Carl Stewart and Amos Crouch. Amos has been master of ceremonies in these later years. He has been president of the group, has taken care of publicity, stage setting and the public address system. Others who were indispensable to us were Georgie Dillingham (deceased), J. M. Caskey, Ernest Spencer--all as stage directors and managers of funds. Then there was the Thomas family. Woodrow was living here then and was a honey with a fiddle; also a couple of uncles were plenty good with the fiddle and guitar. All, all of them were willing to help at any time. Without them it is for sure that many of our Saturday night programs would have fallen flat as a pancake.

There is no way of telling just how many, first and last, have been connected in one way or another with this musical community. In helping to raise money for the March of Dimes, the Red Cross, and other worthwhile causes, there have been many, many forms of entertainment. We shall always be indebted to such people as Buck Taylor, Charlie Townsend, Barney Hill, Dewey Black, Amos Crouch, Sherman and Dossie Cottle, Johnny Williams, Lyle Petty, Charlie Hasty, Ed Price, Fred Langhennig and his entire family, Floyd Ferguson and daughters. Nor can we leave out Buddy Ferguson, Malcolm, Janey and Davis Caskey, Wanda Stiles, John Parilla, Frank Parilla, Hershel Cameron, Harold Asher, Lela Mae and Bill Asher, Cozette Mott, LaQuinta Roberts, Don Rives, Carla Stewart, Harry Stewart, Edwina Harton Smith, Rollins Brown, Joy Ruth Dillingham, Harold Harton, Ruth Dillingham, Donna Fay Stewart. And the Hoover sisters, Elvin Smith, Laudy and Laudell Stewart, Charline Arthur. Yes, the same Charline Arthur who has several hit records which have chalked up more than a million

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sales each. Then we knew Bob Montgomery, now of Nashville. Look out for his big hits: "Taste of the Blues," "Because I Love You So," and others of his own composition. The Booth brothers, Max Copeland, Mr. Plez Hallmark, LaQueta Morris, Mike Zuniga, Sr., "Condo" Condido. The Greens--Keith and his mother could make any program a success. And some more: Ed Carter, John Gautier, Wilbur Daily, Julu (Judy Lou) Layne Hasty, Jimmie Lee Williams, Charity Love Harton, Willie Williams, LaVelle Morris, Elaine Hasty, Edith Kincheloe.

John Parilla (deceased) and Frank Parilla, two of the best musicians ever to appear on our show were outstanding in their work. At one time they had a couple of boys who played with them: the Corancho brothers; a band with two fiddles and two guitars--all four Mexican folks--they played some of the best music one could ever want to hear. John later played the accordion most of the time, although he was a fiddler to perfection. Frank, the son, plays a mean guitar and never says a word--just a fine boy and an excellent musician.

During the war days there had been a lot of moving around as the people over Camp Hood way had to make room for the camp area. Being a Mobile Tank Destroyer Training Unit it had to have lots of room, so a lot of the folks in moving around it was only natural that some of them would come our way. One in particular was a fellow that we have made great use of in the Hayloft Gang--Dewey Black. Dewey was the first president of our organization. Besides helping with the business end of the gang he is a good old-time fiddler and does blackface comedy. He has made some pretty good speeches on our political situation and has some pretty good songs that he has composed himself. In fact, Dewey is a mighty good all-around fellow. His wife Alma has been a lot of help too with ideas on stage appearance, costumes and the like. She's always willing to help on those wonderful fish fries and suppers the gang has now and then. Cora Ellen, daughter of Dewey and Alma Black and now Mrs. Fred Crooks, has a beautiful voice and has done a lot of singing on the programs. She's done a lot of singing in duets as well as in trios. We can always use families like the Blacks in our community.

Charles Moss, a Llano boy, moved into our town and stayed a couple of years with us. About the time he came our way our show had run out of somebody to play our Red-headed Toby. So we talked Charles into taking the part in the deal--and he made a good one. Dinny Bell also played the "Toby" part occasionally, but what with working at Fort Hood and with farming and ranching he just did not have the time to be with us much. Morgan (Mugs) Clark also played the "Toby" part a few times. He was always a good character in home-talent plays--he can play any part from Toby to the baby in the Womanless Wedding--and we may say that at the latter he is a knockout.

Melba (Morris) Edwards, although born and reared here, just started singing a few years ago. She has an excellent voice, can sing solo or in duets and trios. Daryl doesn't sing but he is always around when we need him--to decorate the stage, pull curtains, what have you. They are fine folks and help make the show go. They have two of the sweetest twin girls you ever saw; and as far as talent goes, you'll be hearing a lot about them later--Karon and

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Sharon. And we must mention old Don "Gotch" Fry--a real singer of "Good Old Mountain Dew"; and his daughter Martha Jo, the little "Red Head," doing duets with her dad. She can sing any song that can be whistled.

Barney Hill, another newcomer, has been a lot of help to the Hayloft Gang. Always ready to go, he is a good fellow as well as a good fiddler. Anything the gang wants to do suits Barney. If it's a benefit show or charity of any kind, Barney goes along. He takes his own car, pays his own way, never says a word. Mrs. Hill is also a booster. She helps with suggestions and keeps us in good spirits.

John Gautier belongs to us although he lives down Florence way. He plays the fiddle like nobody's business--I mean plays one! He plays anything from hill-billy to long-haired music. He also plays the guitar when necessary and can fill in on the bass fiddle when needed. John has also done quite a bit of emceeing, especially on the occasions when we have gone over McClosky way. He has been offered several jobs up in the money but his one answer is: "I'm no fiddler; I'm just a farmer." Verba, Mrs. Gautier, is another fine booster and always comes up with good ideas for the show. We are grateful for all that she has done for us.

H. W. (Dub) Bizzell, another fine fiddler, moved into our community about the time we started all of this foolishness. He has always been of great help and plays the smoothest fiddle you ever heard. He works out of town and can't spend a lot of time with us. Believe me, we miss him when he's away. In a tight he can pick up the old bass fiddle and do a pretty good job with it.

Well, if we've left anybody out blame us. The compiler's only responsibility has been to put all of this in something approaching readable English. But before we sign off, let's do a little bragging about the first homecoming. In 1955 we got the silly idea into our heads that we could put on a barbecue--donate something if it pleased you or come free--and everybody invited. Well, we fed over 2,000 people and had a lot left over. Such an undertaking could have been possible only with the help of so many wonderful people who donated their time and money without thought of return. It was a wonderful occasion--a good time meeting and greeting friends.

Of course I can't close this without mentioning the improvements which have been made in our cemeteries--the clean-up campaign, new fences, monuments--all from funds donated by people who love our little town and who have ties here that continue to bring them back. And so a big THANK YOU from the depths of the hearts of all of us--and may the Good Lord bless you--you wonderful people.

--H. E. Harton

*Call it coincidence or what you will, but in the evening of the very afternoon when Mr. Harton handed me his manuscript I was also handed a copy of

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Mr. McDaniel's THE TITANIC. It came about in this way. That evening we were visiting with Mrs. Gil Reed in Burnet. Now widowed and in her 87th year, Mrs. Reed and her husband, the late Gil Reed, went to Briggs in 1898. I was telling her that I had spent the afternoon in Briggs--and, well, that set her to talking. And talk she did for the better part of the evening. Just as I was leaving she said: "O, wait a minute, I've got something I've been saving for you." And what was it she had been saving for me? Mr. McDaniel's poem!

Readers of the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School will recall that we met Mr. McDaniel in the Gum Springs Literary Society where he was dubbed "The Poet Laureate of Mill Creek." While we can't place Mr. McDaniel with the great poets of earth, we must admit that he was about as completely uninhibited as they come. His "Titanic" is too long to repeat here but we will quote a few excerpts to show what we mean.

THE TITANIC

Built for the most sumptuous palace afloat the water,
Hence proof of the greatest juggernaut of modern slaughter.

Was strong and great, with ribs of steel, wrought into solid plate,
Hence crowned Empress of the ocean and decked in royal state.

Valor in the face of death bequeathed each a hero's crown,
Tho' buried in the ocean's vast, two thousand fathoms down.

And only where the mariner's compass can find the trace,
For no imposing shaft can ever mark that fatal place.

The poem is signed "Wm. McDaniel, Briggs, Texas." It was written soon after the destruction of the Titanic and was published in the Burnet Bulletin.

* * *

FROM THE MOONLIGHT SERENADERS TO THE HAYLOFT GANG(It's a Heap of Fiddlin' and Singin' Aroun' Here)

A photograph of the Briggs Hayloft Gang rehearsing for its Christmas party in 1952 is shown on Plate 13. Identified are, standing, left to right: Willie Williams, Janie Caskey, Malcolm Caskey, J. C. Wright, Mrs. J. C. Wright, Max Copeland, Amos Crouch, Dewey Black (with violin), Elvin Smith, Frank Parilla (with guitar), Lyle Petty, Dan Fry, Edwina Smith (with accordion), Edwin Harton, Buck Taylor, Johnny Williams, Barney Hill. Seated, left to right: Charlie Hasty, Julu Hasty, Joan Williams, Elaine Hasty, Janice Williams, Roddy Williams (on floor), Martha Jo Fry, Davis Caskey (on floor), John Parilla (with violin), Charlotte Jane Harton, Dossie Cottle, Charity Harton, Harold Harton.

THE BRIGGS HOMECOMINGS

Full credit for the first Briggs homecoming must go to Edwin Harton. Time and time again for years he spoke of the possibility of such an occasion, ever hoping to arouse interest in the idea. But the years rolled by with little success. Then one day as he and Jesse C. Williams walked out of the Mahomet cemetery after having attended the funeral of Earl L. Williams they stopped to talk. In the course of their conversation Edwin said: "Why can't we get together sometime and visit with our friends without having to wait for a funeral to bring us together?" As their answer to that question the two men decided then and there to do something about getting the people together in a general homecoming.

Having determined to arouse a wide-spread interest in a community homecoming, they began talking with everyone about the idea. Edwin led the way. He worked, talked, managed, served as general chairman, and kept harmony among the homefolks as no one else could possibly have done. He rightly deserves much of the credit for the Briggs homecomings--occasions which through the past several years have brought together thousands whose roots run deep in Briggs and its history.

Roberts Dillingham deserves his full share of credit too. Perfectionist that he is, he would only be satisfied with the best. Caught up with the idea at once, he worked, planned and financed the first homecoming to the amount of more than a thousand dollars. True--and much to his surprise and entirely unexpected--he was reimbursed by donations. But the idea that he might be reimbursed did not lessen his interest in making the first homecoming a success. He set before himself one goal: Only the best would do! There were to be no tickets at the gates--all were to be admitted free. The occasion was to be just one big WELCOME to everyone who had ever lived here or who had an interest in Briggs and her people.

And so the first homecoming was announced for Saturday and Sunday, September 3 and 4, 1955.

Program
BRIGGS HOMECOMING
Briggs, Texas

September 3rd and 4th, 1955

Saturday, September 3rd:

2:00 P. M.--Boys' Baseball Game at the School House
Liberty Hill vs. Burnet

8:00 P. M.--Program. Briggs Hayloft Jamboree Gang.
At Dillingham Park

THE BRIGGS HOMECOMINGS

Sunday, September 4th:

9:00 A.M.--Sunday School at Baptist Church
9:30 A.M.--Sunday School at Church of Christ
10:00 A.M.--Church Services at Baptist Church
11:30 A.M.--Speaking at Dillingham Park
12:00 Noon--Free Barbecue Dinner Served
1:30 P.M.--History of Briggs
Acknowledging Visitors, Ex-Teachers, Largest
Family, and Persons Traveling Farthest Distance

2:00 P.M.--Honoring the Oldtimers
Speaking
Singing

Truly all roads led to Briggs that Saturday and Sunday when the local people and a number of former residents were joint hosts to close to 2,000 friends, relatives and neighbors, and others who in one way or another have cherished an interest in Briggs through the years. Childhood friendships were renewed, schoolday experiences were relived, grownup hardships were recounted--all in a continual chatter extending over the two-day celebration. Out-of-town people began gathering on Friday and pitched camp for the duration. Homes were opened to visitors; groups assembled on the sidewalks in front of the store and post office, under shades of trees, at the schoolhouse--everywhere.

The celebration proper began Saturday night when the ever-popular Briggs Hay-loft Jamboree Gang was at its best in Dillingham park. Even though the lights went out about ten o'clock in the evening no one thought of heading for home. A full moon furnished enough light for the program to be carried on. Churches were filled to overflowing on Sunday morning; but by the time the homecoming program got under way between 1,500 and 2,000 people had assembled themselves on the benches and under the magnificent oaks of Dillingham park.

With Amos Crouch as master of ceremonies, the homecoming activities began with an invocation by Otis Irvin. A hearty welcome was extended to all by James (Jim) Jones; the response was by Mrs. J. C. Snow (nee Lola Cloud) of San Antonio. Guest speaker was Ernest Langford of College Station. A former resident of Briggs--he started to school here in 1898--Mr. Langford recalled incidents of the 1890s and early 1900s, spoke of the days when the community was known as Gum Springs, later as Taylor's Gin, and finally as Briggs. He reviewed briefly the names of the early families. By a show of hands in the audience it was obvious that many of those present could trace their lineage back to the people who settled here seventy-five years ago or longer. The morning's program was closed by the singing of old familiar hymns under the direction of Mr. Herschel Cameron, Mrs. Elvin Smith at the piano.

Then came the dinner--and what a treat it was! The finest of barbecued meat--1,000 pounds of it--100 cakes, 100 pounds of chili beans, gallons of coffee; pickles, onions, potato chips--all free.

THE BRIGGS HOMECOMINGS

The program for the afternoon began at two o'clock under the direction of Mrs. H. E. Harton. The history of Briggs, written nearly twenty years ago by Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, was read by Mrs. Fred Juby. All who had ever taught in the Briggs school were asked to stand and be recognized. The following were present: Miss Mattie Dodson, Mrs. O. R. Perkins, Mrs. Velma McKinley, Mrs. J. L. McCarty, Mrs. Ethel Eaves, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, J. C. Wright, Willis H. Hiles, Frank Eden, J. N. Faith, Mrs. T. R. Carson, Mrs. Effie McLeod, Miss Ruth Hasty, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham, Mrs. S. J. Golembeski, Everett Nichols, Mrs. Wilma Clinkscales, Howard Adare, Mrs. D. C. Stanley, Supt. D. C. Stanley and Jim Jones.

The late Mr. L. P. Perkins was the oldest person in attendance. He was 95 at the time; he died recently following his 100th birthday. Other old-timers and their ages were: Mr. C. A. Cloud, 93; Mrs. Kate Davis, 89. The following were all past 80: Mr. Jonathan (Babe) Williams, Mrs. A. R. Baker, Mr. Dave Dillingham, Mrs. Maria Johnson, Mrs. Alice Skaggs, Mrs. Ella Williams, Mrs. Lillie Finchum Davis, Mrs. Lee Landrum. Following their introduction and a word or two about each of them they were given a standing ovation. All over 65 were invited to the stage. Amos Crouch as master of ceremonies then paid all old-timers a beautiful tribute for their part in blazing the trails and paving the way for the present generation.

Five members of the Poor family were present, their ages ranging from 66 to well into the 80s. They were John Poor, Mrs. Lillie Finchum Davis, Mrs. J. R. Smith, Charlie Poor and Mrs. Minnie Langford.

Special attention was called to the fact that Lee Green had lived in the same house for 60 years.

And so came to an end the first Briggs homecoming. But not without the untiring efforts of Roberts Dillingham, Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Harton, and the various committees who gave so unselfishly of their time to make the occasion a success.

* * *

Three years were to elapse before the second homecoming on August 30-31, 1958. The principal speaker for this homecoming was again Ernest Langford of College Station. In an effort to preserve as much as possible of these occasions, Mr. Langford prepared his address for publication in the Bertram Enterprise. Its title was "Briggs--Sixty Years Later," which, together with pictures previously used in Mrs. Skagg's "History," was published in the Enterprise for September 28, 1958. With the kind permission of Mr. N. Oliver Cox, editor of the Enterprise, the address is reproduced elsewhere in these annals.

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September 5 and 6, 1959, were the dates of the third homecoming. Principal speaker for this occasion was Mrs. Una Hall Gilbert of Wichita Falls. As Una

THE BRIGGS HOMECOMINGS

Marie Hall, Mrs. Gilbert started to school here in 1895 when the community was called Taylor's Gin. Her address was published in the Bertram Enterprise for October 1, 1959, and with the permission of Mr. Cox is reproduced later in the text.

* * *

The fourth homecoming was scheduled for September 3 and 4, 1960. Mr. A. V. Crouch was again master of ceremonies for the Sunday program. The address of welcome was by L. W. Stewart, followed by an inspirational message by Miss Rosemary Farquhar. Mr. C. M. Hasty spoke on "Briggs--1912-1925"; his remarks were published in the Bertram Enterprise for October 6, 1960, and like the others referred to above is reproduced with the permission of Mr. Cox. Dr. J. Gordon Bryson of Bastrop was the main speaker for the day. Centering his remarks around the people of Burnet and surrounding counties and their cultures, his address was well received.

* * *

And so four homecomings have come and gone--four wonderful occasions which have done much in keeping alive memories which run back deep into the last century. It would be impossible to name the different people who helped to make them a success--people who attended meeting after meeting; who made plans and worked to carry them out; who did the many odd jobs, drove many miles, wrote letters and addressed envelopes; who picked and cooked beans, peeled and sliced onions--people who were ready at every call for time and money--all of which when put together resulted in four glorious homecomings and in donations which made possible the beautification of our cemeteries. But even so, mention must be made of a few who have worked every year on one committee or another--people who have attended every meeting, who have given so generously of their time and talents in making the homecomings the successes they have been. They are H. E. Harton, general chairman; S. R. Dillingham, business manager; Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, secretary and program chairman; Mr. and Mrs. Horace Clinkscales, purchasing advisors; H. W. Bizzell and S. R. Dillingham, meats committee; Mrs. S. R. Dillingham, chairman, cakes, cookies and pies; Mrs. L. W. Stewart, Mrs. J. E. Mabe, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, invitations and publicity; L. W. Stewart, J. H. Wilson, G. D. Lane, J. M. Caskey, Jack Patterson, Ernest Spencer, Jack Mabe, E. B. Godwin, Fay Shields, C. M. Hasty, work at the grounds; Mrs. J. M. Caskey, Mr. and Mrs. H. Adare, Mrs. Jud R. Smith, Mrs. C. M. Hasty, Mrs. J. H. Wilson, Mrs. C. F. Wooten, foods committee.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

BRIGGS HOMECOMING*

August 30-31, 1958

Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

A bigger and better homecoming, which had been in the making for several months, came to life this Labor day week-end when many former residents with their families and friends gathered at the Dillingham Park for a night and day of happy association together.

Some two thousand people were on hand Saturday night and Sunday and enjoyed the splendid program of the ever popular Hayloft Gang Saturday night and a program of gospel singing, speaking and various other numbers Sunday morning. The fine barbecue dinner was served at the noon hour. Supplies for the feast consisted of 632 pounds of barbecue, 125 big loaves of bread, 100 pounds of onions, over a hundred cakes, many gallons of pickles and potato chips galore and gallons of black coffee. Mr. Shirley and his helpers from Killeen were given a vote of thanks for the splendid job they did in serving the vast crowds so rapidly.

Thanks was expressed by Horace Clinkscales in behalf of the various committees for the wonderful cooperation from the folks at home and neighboring towns and communities. Editor N. Oliver Cox had our thanks for printing free the 600 invitation cards that were mailed prior to the celebration. Ernest Langford was thanked heartily for the interesting speech he made concerning the history of the early school days in Briggs. Mrs. Lola Cloud Snow received thanks for her well rendered response address. All in all, it was a decided success in every way and a happy time, long to be remembered.

It was impossible to get the names of all the out of town people, but guests in the various homes were: In the H. W. Bizzell home, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Davis of Big Spring; guests of Mrs. J. L. Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. Amos Patterson of Lawn; Mrs. L. S. Skaggs home were Mr. and Mrs. M. O. Ellison and Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Brown of Dallas; in the S. R. Dillingham home, Mr. and Mrs. Emory C. Williams of San Antonio; in Mrs. Lena Caskey's home were Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Hickman and Deanna of San Antonio; Ready caskey, Jr., Wills Point, Jack Patterson of Mississippi, Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Keeling and sons of Georgetown and Mrs. Milly Patterson of Marble Falls.

Also in the Roy Jordan home, Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Hickman of Alice, Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Daniels and son of Fredericksburg, Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Hill, Jr., of Lampasas and Mrs. H. L. Wade of Brownwood.

In Mrs. Sidney Dale's home were Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Wiley of Hutto, Mr. and Mrs. Olan Walton of Temple, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Wiley of San Marcos and Mrs. Zelma McCann of Houston. At the C. M. Hasty's were Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Goodwin of Ardmore, Oklahoma. At the Carl Spinks were Mr. and Mrs. Kelse Cloud and children of Ozona, Miss Nelda Cloud and Mrs. Ruth Rebebaux and Ann of Austin. In the Serran Daniels home were Mr. and Mrs. Hermalee Wilson and son of Lake Jackson.

Others from a distance included Malcolm Teat of Bel Air, California, who was one from the farthest distance, and his sister, Emma of McKinney, Cecil

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Humphries of Port Arthur, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Joyce and Christine of Graham; Mr. and Mrs. Doug Kirkpatrick and baby of Arlington, Mr. and Mrs. Bryson Draper of Corpus Christi. Mrs. A. B. Grisham and Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Williams of Abilene, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Terry, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Smith of Austin; Mrs. Vernon Allgood of Port Arthur, Mrs. Lola Cloud Snow of San Antonio, G. C. Kirk of Brady, S. L. Kirk of San Saba, Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Kirk of Breckenridge, Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Deere of Tulsa, Okla., Mr. and Mrs. T. O. Pulliam and daughter, Mrs. Maude Pulliam and Miss Hazelle of Austin. Guests in the L. W. Stewart, Mrs. Katie Davis and Mrs. A. W. Stewart homes were Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stewart of San Antonio, Mr. and Mrs. Laudell Stewart and three daughters of Corpus Christi, Mrs. Nelse Harrison, and Mr. and Mrs. Harry D. Stewart of San Antonio. Albert E. Cloud and sons were here from Brownwood and visited Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Harton. Minister and Mrs. W. E. Reed of Killeen were guests in the J. E. Mabe home.

W. C. Dillingham, Jr., and three children were here from Brownwood; Mr. and Mrs. Louis Joyce of Graham; Johnie Clifton of Austin, Miss Mattie Dodson of Austin, Mrs. A. B. Moore and family, Mrs. Fred Parson and Mrs. C. O. West of Austin; Mr. and Mrs. Odas B. Moore of Waco, Mrs. Gertrude Jordan of Austin.

Guests in the G. D. Lane home were Mr. and Mrs. Inman Daniels of Los Angeles, California, who were the other two who came the farthest distance. Mrs. M. S. Dwyer of Jollyville and Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Taylor and the H. O. Wibmer family of Fort Worth.

Guests of Misses Ruth and Tennie Hasty were Mr. and Mrs. Pepe Cehand and family of Prescott, Arizona; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Shands and Mrs. Alta Milliam of Austin, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Cehand and Mrs. Jamie Petrick and sons of Burnet.

Also Mrs. Ethel Eaves of Austin, Mrs. Una Gilbert and sisters, Lillian and Pearl, of Wichita Falls, Mrs. Vernon Allgood of Lake Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Poss Holly, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Smith and family, Mildred and Lee Smith of Austin; Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Jackson and Mr. and Mrs. Billie Jackson of Abilene.

Mr. L. P. Perkins, who will be 99 years of age in November was the oldest person present. He was a former resident of Briggs, but has lived in Florence for many years.

S. R. Dillingham, made an appeal for funds to improve the three cemeteries. Sixteen hundred and thirty-two dollars was donated for this work. It is hoped that enough money will be collected to erect cyclone fences around each cemetery and other necessary improvements be made.

*Reprinted from the Bertram Enterprise of September 4, 1958, with the permission of Mr. N. Oliver Cox, editor and publisher.

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Address at Briggs Homecoming, August 31, 1958

Ernest Langford

To those of you who may be wondering who I am, and by what right I presume upon your time, I should like to say that my roots run deep here. Lying in the cemetery yonder within the sound of my voice are my maternal grandparents, the G. T. Fewells, and resting beside them is my great-grandmother, Mrs. Jane Paralee Cox, who was born July 4, 1830. I am the oldest son of Marcus Lafayette and Maud Clarence Fewell Langford. My mother was the second child in the Fewell family.

My Grandfather Fewell was a veteran of the Civil War. He fought through the full four years of that conflict as a soldier of the Confederacy. He must have brought his family to this area in the late 1870s and settled somewhere between here and Florence. My mother once showed me when I was about five the log cabin in which her family lived when she started to school at the age of six in Florence. Sometime in the early 1880s they moved to the Gum Springs area where she also went to school to Mr. W. C. Taber.

For the assistance in the preparation of my remarks I should like to express my gratitude to your own Mrs. Snow Skaggs, Clarence and Eulalia, Roberts and Evelyn Dillingham, Mr. Henry Campbell of McKenzie, Tennessee, and Mrs. Una Marie Hall Gilbert of Wichita Falls. Mr. Campbell deserves particular credit for the help which he has given, and I should like to begin these reminiscences with him.

But before speaking of him, I want to express to Roberts Dillingham our thanks for his unselfish interest in making these homecomings possible. I have not kept in too close touch with him through the years, but I have heard enough to know that he has turned many a good deed of which you and I shall never know. Briggs is a better community for his having dwelt among you.

Mr. Campbell was the principal of the Gum Springs school during the terms of 1892-93 and 1893-94. He was born in or near the Oatmeal community of Burnet County in 1867 and started to school there in 1873. During the first year he was at Gum Springs he boarded with my grandparents, the Fewells, and during the second year with my parents. He has recently sent me a picture of the Gum Springs school made in April 1893. In that picture are the children who are now our uncles and aunts, our grandparents and great-grandparents. Many of the names have come to be familiar names in this community, and I should like to call the roll so that you can recognize just where you fit into that picture. These are the family names of youngsters who are in the picture of the Gum Springs school of April 1893.

Adams
Butler
Davis
DeWolf
Dick
Dillingham
Dodds

Dunston
Fewell
Gann
Haney
Hart
Harton
Horn

Kendrick
Landrum
Morris
Nichols
Patterson
Reavis
Taylor

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Weeks

West

Williams

Many of you will recognize your own names. As for me, Jesse and Harry Fewell were my uncles, and Paralee Haney became my aunt-in-law by marrying my mother's oldest brother.

While I am talking about Mr. Campbell and the Gum Springs school I should like to recount for you a discovery which came as a total surprise to me--and which in a manner of speaking shows you that you do not know who your next door neighbor is. In one of my letters to Mr. Campbell I asked him who his predecessors were in the Gum Springs school. He mentioned a name or two but said that he could not think of the name of the man whom he succeeded. But then exactly two days before I showed Clarence Dillingham the picture to which I have just referred, I received another letter from Mr. Campbell in which he wrote that a Mr. Ward was his immediate predecessor but that he could not recall his initials. While Clarence was looking at the picture I asked him if he knew who preceded Mr. Campbell. "Sure," he said, "Mr. R. E. Ward, who later had something to do with Georgetown."

Now hear this!

For forty-five years I have known intimately at Texas A & M College a distinguished professor of electrical engineering, Professor Robert Page Ward. But I had to come to Briggs and Clarence Dillingham to identify him as the son of a teacher in the Gum Springs school in the early 1890s.

Lest those of the modern generation may wonder where the Gum Springs school was located, the best I can say is that it was near the headwaters of what was called Little Berry Creek. If you will drive about two miles due south from this spot and turn left one mile you will come to what at that time was a group of springs which probably constituted the headwaters of Berry Creek. Hard by these springs stood the cotton gin of Mr. George West, the residence of Dr. John C. McCarty, the school building, and the Gann residence in which both my parents and grandparents lived in the 1890s.

The Gum Springs school was organized in the early 1880s. It was the only one in this entire area and it was there that our parents and grandparents went to school. Mr. Campbell was the last teacher in the original building, a one-room structure which was destroyed by a tornado in the summer of 1894. I remember that storm very vividly because it blew away the kitchen wing of our house, destroyed all the barns, and wreaked havoc generally for the course of about a mile.

Following the destruction of the Gum Springs school, a new building was erected upon the site of the present Briggs school in 1894-95. Mrs. Skaggs has very ably written how the money was raised for that building, and it was in it that I started to school in 1898. The building was a two-story structure about 30 by 40 feet in area in which the pupils were separated more according to age than to ability. The little kids went upstairs, the big ones downstairs. The

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first principal of the new school was Mr. Jack Smith, who had the big students downstairs, while Miss Rose DeWolf corralled the younger ones upstairs.

(A two-story addition possibly 30 x 50 feet was added to this first building in the early 1900s. The first floor contained two classrooms; the upper story was the lodge room of the Woodmen of the World. This unit was erected across the west of the old building, so that the plan became something like a capital T. It was this entire structure which was blown to smithereens by the tornado of April 12, 1906.)

By the time I started to school Mr. J. N. Matthews* had become principal and Miss Lola McSween his assistant. Miss Lola was my first teacher and I remember her as a very able woman. She is now Mrs. Scott T. McGuire, Sr., widowed, and lives in Austin. I spent a most happy and pleasant afternoon with her just a short time ago. Miss McSween taught through the year of 1898-99 and until the Christmas vacation of the school year 1903-04 when she resigned and was succeeded by Miss Mattie Dodson of Burnet. I have visited with Miss Dodson many times through the years, and some of you will recall that she was here for the homecoming three years ago. Other teachers whom I can recall and to whom I went to school were Mr. Carl M. Marrs from Marble Falls and a brother-in-law of Mr. Matthews; Mr. George Atkinson from Burnet; Miss Ludie Butler of the Butler family whom I have mentioned previously; a Mr. Majors; and finally Mr. Lucien L. Price, to whom I owe an eternal debt of gratitude. It was he who huddled some ten or twelve of us youngsters together when the tornado of April 12, 1906, practically obliterated the city of Briggs. Mr. Price was seriously injured, but he saw that each of us was accounted for and comfortably put into the care of someone before he thought of himself. He received a terrible facial wound which all but scalped him, but every one of us had his wounds cleansed and was given some kind of attention before he sought aid for himself.

A word or two may be in order as to why there were so few students in the building when the tornado struck. Mr. Price must have been aware that ominous clouds were hanging about as he dismissed the school earlier than usual so that the children who lived in the country could get home before the storm broke. By the time he got most of the children out of the building torrential rains began; and since my parents lived only a block away I remained to sweep out the building after school. (The free session was over and I was acting as janitor to pay my way for the last month.) Our home was skidded off its foundation, moved half way across the lot and settled down a bit askew. Because we lived closest to the school, every available space in the house was immediately converted into something bearing the resemblance of a hospital. Several of the more seriously hurt students were made as comfortable as possible for the night and well into the next day. As I recall now, Mabel DeWolf and I were the two most seriously injured and we were kept in bed for a week or more before we were permitted to get up and out.

One person died as a result of injuries received by the tornado, Miss Inez Hickman of Florence who was visiting her sister Mrs. Robert A. Patterson.

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About four weeks ago I came to Briggs to talk with Mrs. Skaggs, Roberts and Evelyn and Clarence Dillingham, about my part on this program. We more or less agreed that after a general introduction which would cover the attention which our forebears gave to the problem of educating their children I should mention several who started to school in Briggs and who later achieved a measure of success in life. It is with a degree of timidity that I speak of myself, but with a great degree of satisfaction that I speak of others.

It has always been my belief that Una Marie Hall was the first person from Briggs to receive a degree from an institution of higher education and that possibly I was the second. In any event, Una Hall entered in 1905 what was at that time called Baylor Female College in Belton. She was graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in 1909. She later received her master's degree in 1933 from the National University of Mexico. She recently told me that from the day she started to school in Briggs until she retired in 1945 she had spent fifty years of her life either as a student or a teacher. As I recall the youngsters with whom I went to school, I would say that Una Hall was certainly one of the brightest, most alert, and eager to learn. Her record bears that out.

The second Briggs pupil whom I want to mention--unfortunately, it has not been my pleasure to know him too well--is James Winfred Edgar, Commissioner of Education for the State of Texas. He was born here September 15, 1904, the son of James William and Sarah Morris Edgar. Old-timers will remember his father as the postmaster when this community was known as Taylor's Gin. Winfred, as the older folks will remember him, received his bachelor of arts degree from Howard Payne College in 1928, his master's degree from the University of Texas in 1938, and the degree of doctor of education from the University of Texas in 1948. He is doing a magnificent job as Commissioner of Education, and it is with no little pride that Briggs claims him as one of her own.

Next I want to mention Homer Clyde DeWolf, son of Hill and Genie Griffin DeWolf. Born here on March 24, 1901, Homer achieved his measure of fame before being untimely cut down just after passing his fortieth birthday. He was graduated from the Lampasas High School in 1918, attended Texas A & M one year and graduated from the University of Texas School of Law with highest honors in 1928. He was a member of the Texas House of Representatives from 1929 to 1932 where he was the author of the junior college law. He served as assistant attorney general from 1932 to 1934, and after four years as general attorney for the Rural Rehabilitation Division he was appointed to the State Board of Education January 1, 1939. Homer was married to Miss Ruyel Keese of Goldthwaite in 1925 and at the time of his death was survived by her and two sons, Robert Hill and Homer Clyde, Jr., his father and mother, a brother Clinton and a sister, Mrs. James C. Wiseley.

With a degree of timidity I now account for myself. I started to school here in 1898 and retired from a long career in architectural education September 1, 1957. I went to school in Briggs eight years, three years in Bertram, from which high school I graduated in 1909, and four years at Texas A & M College where I was graduated in 1913. I returned to Texas A & M in 1915 as an instructor in architecture and drawing, spent the years 1919-25 on the architec-

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tural faculty of the University of Illinois where I also received my master's degree in 1924. I returned to Texas A & M in 1925 as professor of architecture, was made head of the department in September 1929, and retired twenty-eight years later. Any way you figure it, this adds up to the fact that fifty-seven years of my life have been spent either as a pupil or a teacher in the processes of educating our young people for the responsibilities of citizenship. Una Hall wrote me the other day that if she had it all to go over she would do the same thing again. So would I.

Shall we now return to Taylor's Gin and Briggs?

Right at the end of the last century Mr. Walter Rountree surveyed and platted the township of Briggs. Mr. Wayne A. Barton, county clerk of Burnet County, has recently prepared for our use today a copy of Mr. Rountree's survey. I have it here for you to look at, and I am sure it will surprise you, as it did me, to find all of the streets properly named and located. I would like to offer the suggestion to the officers of this homecoming association that a worth-while project would be the installation of proper markers so that the names of these streets may be preserved to posterity. And for that matter, the site of the original Gum Springs school should be sought out and appropriately marked.

My memory runs back to Taylor's Gin and Mr. J. W. Edgar as postmaster. Mrs. Skaggs has recorded some of the early history of this community, but it is worth mentioning again that a post office was first established here on March 27, 1888 and was called Taylor's Gin. I remember the general merchandise store of Mr. Edgar and the adjacent blacksmith shop of Mr. A. W. Horn. These buildings were located on the left just at the bend of the old road as one came into the community from the south. The name of the post office was changed to Briggs on June 21, 1898. These dates have been verified for me in a letter dated August 19, 1955 from the General Services Administration, Washington, D. C.

It must have been about the time the name was changed to Briggs, or possibly a year or two earlier, that Mr. Edgar built a new store building some three or four blocks north of the original site. With much more commodious space he established a typical country store wherein one could buy anything from the proverbial paper of pins to funeral shrouds. Mr. Horn also rebuilt his blacksmith shop and later took into partnership with him Robert A. Patterson.

Following the construction of Mr. Edgar's building and the erection of the blacksmith shop several other businesses appeared in fairly quick succession. Dr. W. R. Hazlewood erected the first drugstore in Briggs in 1897, and it was largely through his influence that the name was changed to Briggs in honor of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Henry D. Briggs. Other early businesses included a restaurant owned and operated by a Mr. Gude, and the John Henry Lewis cafe and barbershop--which incidentally was the first barbershop in Briggs. Later on two men from Burnet, a Mr. Burns and a Mr. Harrell, established a general hardware store; Mr. J. T. Hall built a general store into which the post office was later moved and where Mr. Hall served as postmaster for twenty

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years or longer. It must have been about this time that Asa Jackson opened his store; that a pool hall was established; that Mr. W. G. Ireland, who advertised himself as "Traveling Artist," opened what he was pleased to call a photographic studio; and that someone whose name I do not recall established a confectionery where one could buy ice cream, soda water, etc. The W. T. Jennings general merchandise store was probably the last of the more pretentious structures to be erected at the very beginning of this century.

Taylor's Gin and Briggs were without a church building during most of the first two decades of their history. For a long time there was in the Gum Springs area what was called a Primitive Baptist church, and a Missionary Baptist church was somewhat farther removed toward Florence. This latter church was moved to Briggs in the last years of the 1890s. The Methodist people erected a church about two miles to the south; it was called the Prairie View Methodist Church. This building was dedicated in the early 1890s and was removed to Briggs in the spring or summer of 1906.

Prior to the moving of these two buildings all of the local church services were held in the schoolhouse, as were practically all of the community gatherings. Revivals conducted by itinerant evangelists--the woods were full of "fire and brimstoners" in those days--were held under brush arbors or tents where people sat on what approximated a 2 x 12, positively the most uncomfortable seating arrangement ever devised by the mind of man.

I am often asked what in the world people so isolated at the turn of the century did for amusement. The answer is very simple--they made their own! There were singing schools, a literary society, spelling bees (we called them spelling matches), parties, and what often turned out to be the greatest entertainment of all--the charivari, a tremendous serenade of discordant noises by means of which newly-married couples were welcomed into the community. We made a shortened verb out of the word, and there were few such couples who were not "shivareed" on their wedding night.

In searching around for material for these remarks I came across another interesting fact. I had always assumed that Dr. J. C. McCarty was the first doctor in the community. In one of my letters to Mr. Campbell I asked if this were so. He wrote me that I was in error; that Dr. H. L. Edens was the first doctor to come to Taylor's Gin; that he came here in 1891, preceding Dr. McCarty by a year or so, and that soon after his arrival he married the "young widow Landrum." Well, just last Friday I visited this same "young widow Landrum"--she is the widow of Dr. Edens, lives in Bertram, and on August 3 celebrated her ninetieth birthday. She is alert, in good health, and remembers clearly her years in this community. Two of her sons are successful physicians: Dr. Marvin M. Landrum of Lampasas and Dr. Lee E. Edens of Austin. She told me that her marriage to Dr. Edens was one of the first "church" weddings in the Prairie View Methodist Church, what with bridesmaids, ushers, a wedding march, and all that; that she and Dr. Edens were married December 1, 1892, that they moved to Bertram in 1893, and that she has lived in the same house there for the past sixty-five years. And what is more: attendants at the wedding were William Reavis, Miss Minnie Ponder, W. R. Potts, and Miss Fannie

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Landrum. The organist was Miss Hannah Carpenter, the minister a Baptist clergyman, a Dr. Reynolds of Florence.

The spelling match must have a place in these notes. That was an affair in which everybody participated. Mr. Will Dillingham and my mother were accepted as the best spellers in the community and by general agreement they were the two who chose the sides for a spelldown.

To get a spelling match underway, Mr. Dillingham and my mother would seat themselves at the front of the schoolroom, the schoolmaster would open his spelling book and announce that whoever of the two could guess nearest the page to which he had opened his book would have first choice. That formality out of the way, choosing of sides began and every person in the room would be chosen. It was not an uncommon sight to have spellers whose ages ranged from six to sixty arraigned against each other. Once sides were chosen and lined up the schoolmaster would begin selecting words from his spelling book and the night's entertainment was under way. When a person missed a word he dropped out of line. Generally this dropping out continued until Mr. Dillingham and my mother were left. They not infrequently spelled against each other until midnight, and on more than one occasion the whole thing was declared a draw.

It was not only in spelling matches that the pupils of the Briggs school were put on their mettle. As I recall now there was literally a spelling match every afternoon during the school session. Such things as organized class periods were utterly unknown. The first thing we did in the morning when school "took up" was to add and subtract simple figures; then there might be a reading exercise, but whatever else happened spelling came last in the afternoon. Pupils were lined up against the front wall facing the teacher with the right being the "head" of the class. There were both a "head" and a "foot," and the greatest humiliation a good speller could suffer was to have to go to the foot of the class--which was the penalty inflicted when one missed a word. For every spelling period that the one at the head of the class was not spelled down he was given a "head mark." A daily record was kept by the teacher, and no finer honor could come to a youngster than to have accumulated the greatest number of head marks in a school year.

The best young speller of those years was Leila Dillingham, daughter of the man who with my mother chose sides in the community spelling matches. I might as well confess here that she garnered more head marks than I, but I ran her a close second; and I might add further that in the community spelling matches in order to even out the sides it was agreed that my mother might choose Leila Dillingham on her side while Mr. Dillingham chose me on his side. At least that was the courtesy which Mr. Dillingham and my mother extended to each other.

It is amusing to recall some of the words which we kids of eight or ten years of age were taught to spell. I recall quite clearly that when I was not over ten years of age I could spell "incomprehensibility," "incompressibility," "incommensurability," and many other words which seemed to be of interminable syllables. In spite of the fact that we could spell such words as these, it

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was the everyday words like "fatigue," "separate," "receive," and "niece" that dealt us misery. I recall that much to my embarrassment at one of the community spelling matches I missed the word "icicle" and thus lost my place in line--and disappointed Mr. Dillingham!

A word or two may be in order about the charivari. Next to the noises and din of Christmas firecrackers and anvil-shooting, there was nothing quite like the discordant noises of pots and pans, tin horns, the beating on plow shares, which invariably were a part of the "shivaree." Every newly-wed couple could expect to be "shivareed" but they could never be sure of the hour of the night. Once the merry-makers had arrived with their noise-making artillery, there was no letup until the newly-weds made their appearance and appeased the crowd with cakes and cookies which had been prepared for the occasion.

The oldtime singing school must have at least a paragraph in these chronicles. These "schools" were usually two to four weeks in duration and attracted the young and old alike. They were conducted by itinerant song-masters with only a tuning fork to set the pitch and from song books with shaped notes. Two of the more popular teachers were brothers by the name of McCann; a Mr. C. E. Holtzclaw and a Mr. J. L. McClish also had their day in teaching the people of the community how to sing.

My father could sing bass along with the best of them. He organized a quartet which I am sure was one of the first in Texas to sing "On the Banks of the Wabash."

People who participated in those singing schools sang for the pleasure of singing!

Whatever else the people of Briggs did to entertain themselves, it was at the Christmas season that they really let go. First of all there was the Christmas tree on which was placed a present for every person in the community. For years and years Jim Rhodes was the Santa Claus, and in more times than we shall ever know it was he who saw to it that any underprivileged child had a present placed on the tree.

It was only after the festivities of the Christmas tree were over that the people let themselves go. Old and young alike engaged in such pranks as interchanging wheels on buggies and wagons, then pulling them across town, or taking a buggy apart and reassembling it on top of some building, overturning outhouses, letting cattle out of their pens, and what have you. I believe it was Mr. Homer DeWolf who conceived the brilliant idea that he would circumvent any possibility of tampering with his wagon, or if that were done he would find the culprits the next day. He painted the wagon tongue a brilliant red! He awoke the next morning and much to his chagrin noted that the wagon had disappeared. He then went about the streets shaking hands with everyone, looking for telltale paint marks in the palm of every hand. He was completely out of luck for someone had outsmarted him by slipping a rope through the iron loop at the end of the tongue and pulling his wagon a full two miles away.

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I am sure that only the old-timers will recall that Briggs once had a newspaper. It was published by two brothers, P. H. and H. B. Burke, who established the paper April 12, 1902, and called it the Briggs Enterprise. It was a four-page paper, two pages of which were printed elsewhere. Type for the other two pages was set locally by hand. After about eighteen months the editors gave up the ghost and moved to Bertram and established the Bertram Monitor. (I may note here that the Bertram Monitor was followed by the Bertram Banner, which in turn was succeeded by the Bertram Enterprise, which is now being published under the able editorship of Mr. N. Oliver Cox.)

I learned to set type while the Briggs Enterprise was being published, and when I became fairly adept at the art I was paid fifty cents a week. When the editors moved to Bertram I went along with them, and for my efforts there I was paid fifteen dollars a month and board. I was twelve years old at the time the editors moved to Bertram, and how in the world my parents ever let me get that far from home remains a mystery to me to this day.

Any chronicle such as this must contain an anecdote or two, and it is in this connection that I should like to recount a trade agreement which I made when I was not over eight years of age. Mr. Luck Nichols--I never knew why he was called Luck as he was Mr. W. A. Nichols--kept his milk cows in a pasture whose entrance gate was about two hundred feet from the front of our yard. He drove them regularly in the morning from his home to this pasture--a distance probably the equivalent of eight city blocks. He approached me early one spring about hiring out to him to turn his cows out in the evening, and told me that if I would do that he would pay me at the end of the year. This I did faithfully every afternoon, fully expecting to be handsomely remunerated come the Christmas season. Christmas Eve came and so did Mr. Nichols; and for my year's work in turning his cattle out of the pasture in the evening he paid me the munificent sum of twenty-five cents! I can't recall now what my feelings were at the time, but I do recall how I got even with Mr. Nichols--beginning that very day. Instead of letting his cows out when they came to the gate at milking time that evening I drove every one of them to the back of the pasture!

Another feature of the community life of those days was the implicit faith which the people placed in each other. A man's word was his bond. I am sure that some of the contracts which we moderns draw up today and sign in the presence of witnesses would have been repulsive to most people around here in 1900. I recall hearing my father and mother speaking one afternoon of buying another lot and building a house near the school. As it was we lived all of four blocks from the school, but the lot in which my father was interested abutted the school property and was owned by Mr. A. W. Horn. After several minutes of discussing the advisability of moving, my father and I left the house to go see Mr. Horn about buying a lot from him. We walked all of five blocks to his blacksmith shop, and once arrived there a few pleasantries were exchanged after which my father took Mr. Horn completely by surprise by saying to him: "Wes, I will give you a dollar a foot for 100 feet off the corner of that block yonder." After a moment's reflection Mr. Horn suggested that they walk to the corner and see about how much 100 feet would be. The three of us walked all of a hundred yards to the corner in question when Mr. Horn and my

SIXTY YEARS LATER

father stepped off together what they agreed upon as approximately 100 feet. Mr. Horn then turned to my father and said, "I'll take it." My father then handed him a five dollar bill as a pledge of good faith, whereupon they shook hands and Mr. Horn agreed to have the deed prepared the next day. The deed of this sale is on record in the county clerk's office in Burnet on pages 291-3, Vol. 36, of the deed records of Burnet County, Texas. The point I am trying to make in relating this incident is that here were two men whose words were as good as their bonds. Once they had shaken hands there was no further question about the transaction.

The events and people of whom I have spoken in these reminiscences are related primarily with the last decade of the nineteenth and the very first years of the twentieth centuries. Those of us who played our part in them are rapidly approaching--or have reached--the biblical three score and ten years. As we measure our daily lives that is a long time, but in terms of our niche in the universe it is but a mere watch in the night. We live in our time many lives. We are not the same people today that we were yesterday, let alone seventy years ago! Nor will we be the same people tomorrow that we are today. Growth is slow and imperceptible and all experiences leave their marks. It is probably a good thing for us that it is only in our memories that we can, as it were, play the record back. And that is just what we have been doing--playing the record back.

I should like to close then with a quotation from an address by James H. Pipkin entitled "Son, Remember..." and delivered at the 47th Annual Muster at the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, San Jacinto Day, 1951:

One of the most pitiful sights in the world is that of a grown man who has lost all recollection of his past.....
A school, a state, a nation or a society that has forgotten its own past, that knows no more the great sources of its own vigor, stands in desperate peril.

*Footnote: I have since learned that I was mistaken here. Miss Myreta Matthews of Liberty Hill has made available to me a copy of the original contract between her father Mr. J. N. Matthews and the trustees of the Briggs school. He did not go to Briggs until the fall of 1900--which means that Mr. J. S. Smith was principal of the school during my first two years. The copy of my address which is reproduced here varies slightly from that printed in Bertram Enterprise on September 25, 1958. Certain minor changes have been made in punctuation and sentence structure has been changed in a place or two. The paragraph about Homer DeWolf was inadvertently omitted from the original. I am happy to include it here.

BRIGGS HOMECOMING*

September 5-6, 1959

Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

The quiet little town of Briggs came to life with joy and enthusiasm this Labor Day weekend when some fifteen hundred former residents, friends and neighbors gathered for the annual Homecoming Reunion a week or more in advance of the set dates. People began to arrive from California and other places to be on hand for the gala event, and early Saturday literally droves of cars poured in for the program beginning at the Dillingham Park at sundown. The local Hayloft Gang, assisted by visiting musicians, with A. V. Crouch as Master of Ceremonies, presented a variety program for several hours, much to the enjoyment of the vast crowds. Special numbers were given by the McNeil Quartet of Lampasas, The Barber Shop Quartet composed of Harrold Harton, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Ives and Mr. McNeil of Lampasas, solo by Martha Jo Fry, and a duet by the two young daughters of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Dillingham, Jr. of Brownwood, and solos and duets by Mr. and Mrs. Keith Greene and his mother of Florence. Late in the night the crowd retired to every home in Briggs, and in near by towns, only to rise early the next morning for church services, then to the park where the program proper was held. Minister Geo. Kouri gave the invocation, and then Postmaster Horace Clinkscales gave a stirring welcome address, pausing for a moment of silence for our beloved and honored dead, who pioneered the way for the most of us as we follow in their footsteps.

Mrs. Una Hall Gilbert in her charming and interesting way responded with many incidents of the past which concerned most every family represented at the Homecoming that ever lived here.

Mr. Ernest Langford, guest speaker for the day, continued to reveal things of the past, primarily concerning the school days at Gum Springs, Taylor's Gin and the first few years at Briggs.

Minister Daryl Love offered thanks for the food. After the noon meal some of our prominent citizens were recognized. Mrs. Katie Davis was applauded for being the oldest resident of Briggs and one whose interest soared high for the Homecoming activities. Adrain Baker, a highly respected and successful business man and his family, including his new son-in-law, Mr. Peter Gorman, all from Melbourne, Victoria, Australia were called to the stage and introduced anew, as were Mrs. Lola McSween McGuire, teacher at the turn of the century, and Mrs. Emma Taylor, who taught in the latter years of the old century.

Senior citizens were recognized as they were seated on the stage for pictures. In the group were: L. P. Perkins, who will reach his 100th milestone, should he live to November 19, 1959. He expressed his desire to speak to those who were honoring him, but didn't feel quite equal to the occasion. Next was Sanford Williams, 80, on March 12, 1959; Mrs. Josie Clevenger, 82 last April 17; John Reavis, 82, last November 3, 1958; Mr. Tally Greer, 80, July 20th, who whispered to me that he married Ludie M. Morris 62 years ago September 20, 1959.

Mr. M. A. (Amos) Patterson, young as a 16 year old, said he was born May 21, 1877, now past 82, and Ernest Spradlin was the youngest, 77, August 1, 1959, and Mrs. M. A. Montgomery was in her early eighties.

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Dr. J. W. Edgar, Commissioner of Education, who was born in Briggs was a welcome guest.

Notice was given the following besides the Adrain Baker family, who traveled a great distance to be present; Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Stewart and Mr. and Mrs. Johnie Stewart, Whittier, California, C. S. McNeil, and Mr. and Mrs. Inman Daniels, also from California, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Cehand of Chingo Valley, Arizona, Mr. and Mrs. Perry Godwin, their daughter, Venita and husband of Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Our special thanks go to N. Oliver Cox and his wife for printing the hundreds of invitation cards free of charge, as he has done for the third time; to Radio Station, KLEN, for their sound truck also free of charge; to Mr. Shirley and his staff of helpers who cooked and served the bountiful barbecue dinner, the finest meat that anyone ever ate; to the many ladies who made and donated the delicious pies and to all who had a part in making this a memorable occasion.

Money was raised to finance the building of cyclone fences around the three cemeteries, and also to cover the expense of next years Homecoming.

It was impossible to get the names of the many visitors, but to name some were: In the Jack Patterson home were Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Hickman and Deanna, San Antonio; Mr. and Mrs. Dick Windsor, Copperas Cove, Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Keeling and sons, Georgetown, Ready Caskey, Jr. of Irving and Mrs. Lena Caskey of Bertram.

Bob McBryde of Amarillo was with Mrs. M. L. McBryde and the Horace Clinkscales, and the L. R. Bighams of Killeen.

Others on the ground and visiting relatives from Austin were: O. B. Moore, the Ralph Parks, Mrs. Maude Pulliam and Hazell, Mrs. Eulalia Dillingham and the Jack Terry family, Mrs. A. B. Moore, Mrs. T. H. Malletts, Mrs. Ethel Eaves, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Peacock, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Holley.

From Goldthwaite were Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Powell and Mr. and Mrs. Jake Saylor.

From other places were the Edd Deere, Gordan Smiths, Ernest Hastys, Mrs. Willie Mitchell, Minister and Mrs. Daryl Love and son, Mr. and Mrs. Brison Draper, Mrs. Maude Gower, the Edd and Hubert Deers, John and Bob Edgar, Cecil Humphries, the John Bakers, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Smedley, Pasadena; T. O. Pulliam, Cecil Smith, Mrs. Roy Lee, Mrs. Pearl Hall Moorman, the Paul Toun-gates, the Elmer Thompsons, Bill Whitley, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Pulliam, the former Imogene Reynolds, Mr. and Mrs. Clay Faires, Mr. and Mrs. Emory C. Williams, the Edd Thomas family, including Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Thomas, Mr. Landrum, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Wiley, John Reavis, John Patterson, Odas B. Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Deere, Leonard Kemps, Fred Crooks, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Warren, Austin, Hazel Worley and family, Mrs. Sadie Neal, Jess Russell, Jack Joyce and wife, the Pete Joyces, Dr. R. J. Rodgers and son, Mr. and Mrs. George Halden and Doris, Mrs. Maude McCormick, Judge Joe Evans and family, Mr. and Mrs. Bill

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Jordan, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Joyce, Dee Jordan, Jesse Jolleys, Mr. and Mrs. John McGuire of Temple, Fred Williams, Temple, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Stewart, San Antonio; the Howard Adares. And many, many people from neighboring towns and communities whose names are omitted as we considered them as ourselves--just home-folks, and time and space as well as my rambling mind, is limited. All have been listed from memory and those left out were not intentionally.

Mr. and Mrs. Elisha Price of Austin stayed with Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Price, as did some of his children and families.

Mr. and Mrs. Perry Godwin, their daughter, Venita, husband and two children, from Ardmore, Oklahoma, were with their brother and wife, Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Hasty.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Goodloe of Hico and Mrs. A. D. Stanford of Stephenville were guests of Mrs. L. S. Skaggs.

*Reprinted from the Bertram Enterprise with the permission of Mr. N. Oliver Cox, editor and publisher.

Our main purpose in reproducing Mrs. Skaggs's reports of these homecomings is to emphasize the loyalty of former residents of Briggs--a loyalty attested by the fact that many people traveled long miles to return to the home of their youth for these celebrations.

ADDRESS AT BRIGGS HOMECOMING

September 6, 1959

Mrs. Una Marie Hall Gilbert

Friends, Relatives, New Comers, Old Timers, Old Fossils and Youthful Delinquents

(That should take us all in!)

In May when I attended the 50th Anniversary of the graduation of my class of 1909 at Mary Hardin Baylor--then Baylor Female College--the Secretary of our Alumnae Association told me that a sixteen-year-old college girl who was helping her get the class together, asked her what she was going to do with those old ladies when she got them there--how was she going to get them around? When told that most of us were still teaching, still active, she said--"And graduated fifty years ago? They must be old fossils."

I said "youthful delinquents" because when I first thought about this speech--which isn't a speech at all, but a very informal talk--I thought I'd call it: "Do You Remember?" Then when I began to remember some of the things we did as children and young people here, I decided had we lived in this generation we might have been rightfully dubbed "Juvenile Delinquents," or maybe "Holy Barbarians." Well, after all, the trouble with young people is: They are so young. Bernard Shaw said: "Youth is a wonderful thing; too bad it's wasted on young people."

I was asked to make a "response speech." It wasn't quite clear whether I was to respond to Horace or to Ernest so I'll just respond to both of them.

First, in response to that very beautiful welcoming address by Horace, I want to say on behalf of all of us who have come back that we come with hearts full of gratitude to you who have stuck with the little town, have kept the home fires burning, and have gone to a great deal of trouble to make this Homecoming the immense success that it is. Since we can never forget the people with whom we shared the sunshine of youth, it is so much fun to get together with you and say, "Do You Remember?"

Now in response to Ernest--he has been standing up here on this platform for the past two years telling all about the rise and fall of practically everybody, except Ernest. We all know about his college degrees, his brilliant record as a professor at A. & M. College for half a century, but what you don't know is that Ernest is a mayor. Someone sent me a few days ago a clipping from a newspaper with a large picture of Mayor Ernest Langford of College Station cutting a birthday cake 5 feet long and 3 tiers high. All joking aside, we are proud of Ernest. We are proud of the painstaking effort and research he put into that very excellent speech he made last year on the history of the Briggs schools. We are proud that he loves Briggs and us enough to come back to these Homecomings and speak to us. I understand he is going to put his history of Briggs schools into a book. I want to be the first to get a copy.

As I was parking my car just now Roberts Dillingham and I were reminiscing about cotton picking (as a matter of information, the name is Roberts and not "Bob" Dillingham. Roberts was his mother's family name. She was the granddaughter of Gov. Oran M. Roberts, one of the early governors of Texas, and

ADDRESS AT BRIGGS HOMECOMING

the name is very illustrious in Texas history.) Roberts said, "Right down here is where you used to park that old white topped hack while we went off down there to pick cotton." He pointed to a part of the park that was once a field. In fact Dillingham Park was Dillingham pasture before it got into society. I told Roberts I had never been ashamed that I had lived on a farm, had milked cows and picked cotton, and that I had learned that most people now occupying prominent positions had been brought up just that way. He said, "I wouldn't hire a man who hadn't picked cotton, because I know he wouldn't be any good." I was reminded of an incident that occurred on the streets of Wichita Falls a few days ago. A friend of mine, her husband, and I met a former friend who passed without speaking. My friend said, "She never speaks to me since they made a little money in oil, and they used to pick cotton for us. We all picked together, but it was our cotton." The husband said, "Why don't you sing that old song to her:

"I hope you ain't forgotten,
I met you picking cotton."

One of my college students once, apologizing for being late to his eight o'clock Latin class, said he had to wait for his father to get home with the car that had a heater. I announced to the class: "You students can't come to school in cars without heaters. I used to milk three cows before breakfast, and walk three miles to school in cold weather." After class one of the young ladies stopped by my desk and said: "Mrs. Gilbert, mother has it all over you; she used to milk five cows and walk five miles to school." I never told my story again.

Let's reminisce about Briggs at the turn of the century, or even in the gay nineties when it was Taylor's Gin. Let's talk about the people whom we knew and loved at that time. We were only 30 or 35 families. We had no phonographs, no telephones, no movies, no cars, no radios, no television, not even Rock 'n Roll; but we had initiative and ingenuity. We had school, church, Christmas trees, a literary society, singing schools and parties. We also had a newspaper. I remember the first and last verses of a poem Clarence Dillingham wrote for the Briggs Enterprise:

A hayseed from the country
Came in to see the town.
He stopped at Moore's Hotel,
His name was J. Matt Brown.

The editor will go driving on Sunday,
He looks so exact and precise;
But during the week day he is only
Editor of The Briggs Enterprise.

It was the most beautiful poem I'd ever heard.

Now, let's name the families who were here in early days, and tell something about each family. Then I want to ask each of us to stand, and tell to what

ADDRESS AT BRIGGS HOMECOMING

family we belong, whether sons, daughters, grandchildren or great-grandchildren--That is if we have time after this harangue, and you are not ashamed to stand after I have dragged out some of the family skeletons.

The Clouds, the Dillinghams (Sid and Will), the McGuires, and the Jubys, were the closest neighbors in my neck of the woods. In fact, without Mrs. Will Dillingham, assisted by Dr. McCarty, or Dr. Hines, four or five of my brothers and sisters couldn't have been born. When I'm tempted to be impatient with little children I remember these kind neighbors and their patience with me as I grew up. Mrs. Missouri Dillingham was wonderful. How we loved her and the ginger bread she used to bake for us. Later when we were grown--we thought--she served the most delicious ice cream and cake at our parties--but Mr. Will almost ruined the snap games at those parties--he always hung a lantern on the windmill--which happened to be in the front yard where the snap games were in progress. Leila and Eulalia were our chums. I remember hearing my mother say she would always love Clarence because he was so good to her little children when they started to school. He saddled and unsaddled our horses, fed them at noon, helped us mount and dismount, and fought our school battles for us when some big boy or girl tried to take advantage of us. I remember one afternoon I was crying when he was helping me on my horse. He asked, "What's the matter with you?" I sobbed out my story that one of the big girls had borrowed my nice red pencil that I had saved up eggs a month to buy, and would not give it back to me. He walked back into the schoolhouse, snatched the pencil from the girl, brought it to me and said, "Here, now shut up."

The McGuires were fine aristocratic people. Rose was a beautiful child with dark curls and rosy cheeks, full of energy. She used to say, "Let's run, Eunice, let's run!"

The Jubys had John, Delia, Fred and Jim. I claimed John. We didn't go steady then, we just claimed them, and sometimes the objects of our affection didn't even know they were being claimed.

Mr. Sid Dillingham had three lovely children, Ellen, Roberts and Georgie. The Skaggs, who also were country people and lived a little to the south of us, had Snow, Bryan and Evelyn. When I first knew Mrs. Alice Skaggs she had a millinery store in Briggs. She also had a beautiful span of dapple gray horses and it was so delightful to go with her down to her country home on week-ends and play with her three children. I was five or six years older than they, but we used to have fun piling up rocks and calling them castles. The last time I saw Snow in 1948 he said, "I want you to come with me down to the farm and see a pile of rocks we piled up in 1904 for a castle. We have always called it 'Una's Castle.'"

Mr. Rem Skaggs was a prince of a fellow. I remember once when I was taking the census I reached his house about dark. When he was unsaddling my horse I found I had lost the tablet on which I had been taking the census all day. I said I thought I'd just give up. All this work and trouble to go off to college was just too much. Mr. Rem said, "You are just discouraged because you are tired. Tomorrow we'll go and find your list of names. Of course

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an education is a lot of work and expense, but even at that, I think it's cheaper than ignorance." Before breakfast the next morning a man who lived on Rocky Creek brought me the tablet.

Another of our fine families who lived in the country were the DeWolfs with Rose, Hill, Bessie, Floy, Mabel, Hardy, Mima. Miss Rose DeWolf, my first school teacher, was lovely. To her I give credit for inspiring me to be a school teacher. Mabel was our classmate.

The Woodburys had Henrietta, Earl and Vera. Earl was my first date. We walked from Harton's to Horn's, and according to May Horn and Albert Moore, who walked four feet ahead of us, we exchanged three words. Earl said, "Pretty night," and I said, "Yes."

The Pulliams had Clevey and Richard; the Taylors had Jemima and Hattie, who were in school with us. The Butlers had Ludie, Betty and Haskell in school. The Wests had Villa, Charley, Marvin, Oscar and Erma. Charley, who had reached the tottering age of 19 or 20 was out of school, but how we loved him when he came a courtin' our teachers with his pockets full of candy. Erma married my beloved cousin, Tom Patton.

The Griffins, a very intellectual family, had Genie, Belle, Pansy, Daisy, Frank and Pink. I claimed Frank.

Now, for the city folks:

The Langfords lived down by the schoolhouse and had Ernest. Ernest was chubby, blond, handsome and desperately in love with my sister Peachie. When we were reminiscing at the last Homecoming he confessed to me that the night he went to spend the night with my brother, Horace, he really went to be near Peachie. Now Ernest was a city boy--that night when the dogs barked, and the wolves howled, he got tearfully homesick, but he was made of sturdy stuff even then, and tho' my Dad offered to take him home he refused and stuck it out till morning. The only thing that seemed to bother him, some fifty years later, was that my Dad got us up the next morning at break of day to get us to school on time.

The Horns had Minnie, Jack, May, Lizzie and Harry. May was my chum. Every time it rained, or even sprinkled, we spent the night with the Horns. When our parents wanted to pay something for our board and keep they would take nothing. Mother said we should not stay unless the weather was extremely bad. One day, after this it rained and was cold. While we were debating whether we should stay with the Horns or not, Mrs. Horn sent a note to our teacher: "Tell the children to come--It's too cold for them to go home." All the time we spent with them we never heard a harsh word. The Horns were the best people I have ever known. When the cyclone struck Briggs in 1906 I was away at school, but I was told that Mrs. Horn opened her home as a first aid station for the injured.

The Nichols had Lee, Essie and Molly. Essie's was the first wedding I ever saw, and Molly was beautiful as a little flower girl. When I visited Mrs.

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Luck Nichols in 1948 she was as sweet, gentle, and pretty as ever.

My uncle, Tom Hall, had the post office at Briggs for many years. He said he held it through both Republican and Democratic administrations, because no one else wanted it; but Aunt Em said he held it because he was so accommodating. She had known him to get up from a meal, or even out of bed, and open the post office for some belated farmer to get his mail. Both he and Aunt Em were great people. They had three girls, Merle, Leona and Alberta.

There were the Williams,--Edna, Mable and Tommy. They were our chums after we moved to town.

I only have time to call the names of the rest of these families. I could tell you something about each of them. Maybe there will be another time. Mr. Jim Edgar, who was proprietor of the General Store, the Moores, Uncle Andrew and Aunt Mattie Moore and their two children, Annie May and Doyle. The Joyces, the Jordans and the Tubbs. The Hastys, the Hartons, the Harts, the Ratliffs, the Lindseys, the Ellasons--Marvin is now my cousin--married Leona Hall.

Our teachers were: Mr. Jack Smith, noted for discipline and efficiency; Mr. J. N. Matthews, good and kind; Mr. Carl Marrs, the idol of us small girls; Miss Rose DeWolf, our first teacher--lovely; Miss Willie Fox, sweet and charming; Miss Maud Thomas, sweet sixteen, and a wonderful teacher, tho' younger than some of the big girls in school; Miss Lola McSween, lovely--a wonderful teacher, and beautiful even now.

The older couples who were "going steady" as we grew up were good to us smaller fry. They coached us on the pieces we had to recite at the literary society, chaperoned us on picnics, and looked after us generally. They were: Minnie Horn and Joe Hart; Eulalia Dillingham and Jack Horn; Henrietta Woodbury and Clarence Dillingham; Lee Nichols and Lessie Jordan, and Jim Rhodes. Jim didn't go with anyone in particular, but he was the life of every party. After we got to be teenagers we'd sit at a party and look at each other till Jim came to start things off. He was our perennial bachelor--a humorist with a heart of gold. If he learned that some child did not have a present on the community Christmas tree he bought one and put it there.

These were some of the popular young men around town at the time I left for college. How we girls loved them and their hug-me-tight rubber tired bug-gies--and how the girls picked them off after I was gone! Ernest, in his speech last year made quite an issue about my being the first to go to college from Briggs. When I think about some of the things that happened after I left I am prone to agree with the flapper who said, "An education is all right, but there's no future to it."

These were some of the popular young men around town: Jephtha and Cyrus Landrum, Luther and Will Godwin, Roscoe Perking, John Moore, Carl Cloud, Albert Moore, Lee Nichols, Jack Horn, Forest Ratliff, John and Fred Juby, John and

ADDRESS AT BRIGGS HOMECOMING

Fred Reavis, Frank and Pink Griffin, Earl Woodbury, Harry Snow, Will Dodd, Will Price, Will Alexander and others.

I have read somewhere that best recipe for a good speech is: "Be sincere, be brief, and be seated." I can't do anything about being brief now, but I can be seated--Thank you.

* * *

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ADDRESS AT BRIGGS HOMECOMING

September 4, 1960

Charlie Hasty

From 1912 to _____

THE INCONVENIENCE OF CONVENIENCES, ETC.

First--the lights went out on Saturday night of the Briggs Homecoming!

One hour later a repair crew had replaced a burned out transformer.

In 1912 some considerate soul could have, when the old kerosene torch had gone out, gone to the kerosene can, yanked the potato off the spout, refilled the tank, relit the torch, and light would have been restored in minutes.

Speaking of the old kerosene torches, recalls the summer time "Camp Meetin's" that were a highlight of every community each summer. People came from far and near; by wagon, buggy, surrey, horseback, and on foot to meet with their neighbors and friends. Usually this was under a brush arbor that the men of the neighborhood had labored on for days. Dinner on Sunday and many came and camped nearby during the entire meeting. The present-day high speed automobile makes it convenient for people to travel many miles and then return home to hasten to some other destination, making it inconvenient to tarry and chat with friends. Gone is the leisure time we used to have and enjoy.

In 1912, and later, the only place to go on Sunday nights was to church or to a community singing. Some good neighbors would usually invite the young folks to their home on Sunday nights provided that they behaved themselves. No clowning--just singing religious songs and chatting about nothings. Of course, old dobbin, when hitched to a buggy, was a driverless motor (so to speak) and did not require the inconvenience of steering on the way home.

Now, when the man of the house comes home and there is no supper on the table the little wife can say, "Dear, the power is off," or "The Butane tank ran dry." In the old days if the wood pile played out and there were no sticks of stove wood to cook supper with it was a poor housewife who couldn't go to the place where the woodpile had been and gather enough chips to finish the lord-and-master's supper. Of course, the modern lass is always looking for the opportunity of being taken out to supper or to some swanky restaurant. She welcomes the opportunity! Grandmother, bless her soul, never had the choice.

In 1912, when we needed an article of clothing or footwear, we went to the local merchant who advertised that he carried all sorts of general merchandise. There you could buy anything from a pair of "every-day" shoes and clothes to Sunday-go-to-meetin' duds that, if you found some girl who was willing to take the chance, you could use it for a wedding suit. T. V. Wagon Trains of today had nothing on the 1912 freight trains that traveled the dirt roads to the nearest freight depot.

The 1912 wagon trains didn't fight the "Injuns," neither was there much romance or dramatics during these hauls. It was no easy lot to traverse the

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roads of that time and without them no community could possibly exist. It took a full day to go to Georgetown, one way. They would load up and return the next day.

The road to Lampasas was too rough and at times impassable, so most preferred going to Georgetown. Usually four or six mules were hitched to a wagon train, hauling cotton to market and returning with commodities and staples that supplied the community. Clothing, shoes and dress goods were usually shipped from St. Louis or New York and by the carloads, too. Groceries were the staple variety that had to be prepared and cooked--no worries about the can opener being broken. You always had fresh vegetables, in season. Of course, if it didn't turn out to be a dry summer, Mama and the children usually had a good garden, in the spring. You didn't have to go to the store to get a can of peaches or corn, for on the shelf were dozens of glass jars that didn't need labeling to tell what they held.

Now when you go to the store to get a sack of corn meal--you've decided you'd like a good size hunk of old-fashioned cornbread--but you are disappointed when the result has a texture and taste closely resembling sawdust. Modern mills have taken out everything except the leavings. It's nothing compared with the old corn meal that was ground on an old-fashioned stone burr grist mill that was as popular on Saturday morning as the blacksmith shop. Cornbread baked from the old home ground meal had all the flavor and goodness of the white corn; only a part of the chaff would be sifted out.

Speaking of blacksmith shops--now when your car throws a shoe you have to get out, no matter how muddy, or how hot it is, change the tire and maybe find the spare is flat, too. If old Dobbin threw a shoe, the smithy would nail it on for you, and you could be on your way. If you could find it when he threw it, you would carry it with you to be used again; if you couldn't find it, the smithy always kept a keg full of new shoes on hand.

By the way, when you were a barefoot kid did you ever step on a hot piece of iron that the smithy had just cut off and had let it fall in a convenient spot for you to step on it? The first impression, when you smelled the odor was that it was "hoss hoof" burning. By the time it had burned through the tough hide of your own heel and you realized that it was your "hoof" that was on fire.

Of course we wore shoes only on special occasions. Our heels were nearly as tough as "hoss hoof," so to speak.

Speaking of shoes--when people began to wear shoes, the home-made type--they were both made alike on the same home-made last. When the heel began to wear on one side the shoes were interchanged and then the heels would be worn on the opposite side, thus, lasting about twice as long. Now, you have to take the shoe to the cobbler and have new heels put on. In the old days, the old shoe cobbler, at his cobbler's bench, tacked the heels and soles on and many tacks gouged holes in your heels and toes--they didn't slip on your feet so bad that way.

ADDRESS AT BRIGGS HOMECOMING

Hours could be spent recalling the way of life of the average early inhabitant of any rural community. The changes that have been wrought through the years at times seem to obliterate entirely or detract from the real heritage that has been handed down to the people who today are living in an age of modern conveniences and comforts.

The old days were spent, it seemed, at a much slower pace. We seemed to have more time to enjoy the things about us. Then, too, it is hard to realize the extent to which civilization has taken away or destroyed the resources and fertility that was here when the white man first began to settle the country.

The area around us was a rolling prairie covered with native grasses, so tall that only the tall buffaloes could be seen as they grazed through the valleys.

Around the Gum Springs area one of the largest aggregations of buffalo lived and flourished under the protection of the native Indians that lived in the strip of land between Mill Creek and Berry Creek. The buffalo nearest camp were never molested. The strays that roamed along the San Gabriel and Lampasas rivers supplied the Indians with the necessary meat and hides. Gum Springs, a permanent water supply, was the center of activities of the natives. The first settlers who discovered the springs found that a hollow log was used as a casing for the main spring and they presumed it to be of gum wood, and as the legend goes, the spring was called Gum Springs. Numerous camp sites were located on the divide between Mill Creek and Berry Creek. They can still be located; also, a few artifacts remain. There were two more springs below Gum Springs: one of which was large and supplied enough water to induce the Indians to build a camp nearby, the other one bore no evidence of any important camp sites. For many years Gum Springs was the watering spot of settlers from many miles around.

Before the communities of either Gum Springs or Briggs, also known as "Taylor's Gin," were organized a stage road from Lampasas passed near where the town of Briggs now stands; and as late as 1912 or 1913 the ruts of this old stage road could be easily followed across the hills. This road led to the east toward Youngsport, which at that time was one of the main meeting spots in that area. Both cattle and horses roved the open range and round-up teams found the river and that area a convenient place to camp and purchase supplies.

Through the years past many things and events have instilled in the minds and hearts of the people who lived here a deep regard for the community and its people whom they all called their friends and neighbors. Throughout the years this community spirit and neighborliness that these oldtimers enjoyed has spawned and nurtured the deep feeling and respect that comes from close contact with their fellowman. This fact is evidenced by the number of people who are here today and have come to all the Homecomings held at Briggs in recent years. As long as a community enjoys a morale as strong and as lasting as this, we can rest assured that our civilization and our country will remain a strong and united nation.

* * *

FAMILIES OF GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

Every effort has been made to include something in these annals about the families who have lived in and around Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs during the past seventy-five or eighty years. We have been able to write, or to have written for us, biographical sketches of many of them. For too many others we have been less fortunate. About all we can do here is to mention their names. The list which we have compiled is far from complete. It has been reviewed by several whose memories run back to the turn of the century or beyond. If we have omitted any name which should have been included the oversight is simply one of omission--not commission.

Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs has been blessed through the years with people of high moral fiber, of high standards of citizenship and culture--people who have contributed to our social well-being and to the progress of our country. The families mentioned below possessed all of these attributes. We regret that we can only cite them by names in these annals. They are arranged alphabetically as a matter of convenience. No attempt has been made to indicate the years these families lived in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs. A few names in the list will appear in the biographical sketches later. That is because sons of these families established their own families and chose to remain in the community of their birth.

J. C. Arnold
George Baker
Harvey Bates
Henry Beecham
D. A. Bell
John Binnion
Ernest Black
Floyd Black
W. D. Black
J. L. Bogard
E. Braziel
C. A. Butler
H. R. Caskey
J. M. Caskey
Will Caskey
W. A. Cehand
A. J. Clark
C. P. Cloud
R. R. Crooks
A. V. Crouch
Sidney Dale
C. O. Daniels
G. S. Daniels
John Deere
Hill DeWolf
Homer DeWolf
L. Dixon
John Dunlop

John Goad
J. H. Goodloe
E. B. Godwin
W. S. Griffin
C. C. Grisham
Will Hall
Marshall Haney
Will Hart
Charlie Hasty
Ernest Hasty
J. M. Hasty
W. R. Hazlewood
John Hickman
B. H. Hill
Herschel Kelly
Horace Kelly
Spencer Jamar
John James
W. T. Jennings
Spencer Johnson
L. L. Jones
J. R. Jordan
Ireland Joseph
John Joyce
Sam Kendrick
J. A. King
J. W. King
Lee Landrum

B. Montgomery
C. S. Morris
W. T. Morris
Mrs. Fulton McGuire
John Nichols
John Parilla
R. A. Patterson
L. P. Perkins
O. R. Perkins
Victor Perry
John Poor
Charlie Preslar
H. A. Raines
Gil Reed
M. L. Reed
Walter Rountree
Fay Shields
E. Sherman
Edwin Smith
Jud R. Smith
Kyle Smith
Jack Stiles
Monk Teat
Elmer Thompson
Forest Thornton
Edd Tisdale
J. W. Wadkins
Steve Washburn

FAMILIES OF GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

Dave Ellason	G. D. Lane	J. M. West
John Ellason	Henry Leifeste	C. E. Wiley
Lloyd Ellason	Robert Long	E. L. Williams
P. J. Favors	J. E. Mabe	Henry Williams
Richard Fraley	William McDaniel	H. B. Williams
R. L. Fraley	B. L. Millage	J. V. Williams
John Gautier	Roscoe Perkins	Roland Williams
		J. H. Wilson

FIVE GENERATIONS IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

One of the interesting bits of "digging" which we have been doing in putting these notes together has been that of finding families whose lineage in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs runs through five generations. We have found that several families can in one way or another claim that honor. But the one which seems to have, shall we say, a "prior" claim to the honor is the Marcus (Mark) Patterson family. As noted elsewhere, Mr. and Mrs. Patterson came to the community of Gum Springs in 1882. Their son, M. A. Patterson, says of them that soon after arrival "my father then bought a farm near Briggs and it is still in our name." As a matter of fact, there are three lines of descent through five generations in this family.

- I 1. Marcus Patterson m. Rose Ann Maness
 2. James Lee Patterson m. Lillie Berry
 3. Marcus Earl Patterson m. Mollie Lenora Caskey
 4. Jack LaVaughan Patterson m. Nora Faye Daniels
 5. Marcus LaVaughan Patterson, b. July 6, 1960

- II 1. Marcus Patterson m. Rose Ann Maness
 2. James Lee Patterson m. Lillie Berry
 3. Ona Lee Patterson m. Thad R. Carson
 4. T. R. Carson, Jr. m. Novella Shugart
 5. Bobbye and Marcus Carson, ages seven and four years

- III 1. Marcus Patterson m. Rose Ann Maness
 2. James Lee Patterson m. Lillie Berry
 3. Ona Lee Patterson m. Thad R. Carson
 4. Glynda Carson m. Dayton L. Carpenter
 5. Pat and Mike Carpenter, ages four and two years

Another Patterson family can also lay claim to five generations. And there is this further bit of interest: Taylor, another pioneer name in the community of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs, gets into this lineage.

FIVE GENERATIONS IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

1. George Washington Patterson m. Kathleen Carrol
2. Ella Patterson m. James Andrew Taylor
3. James Andrew Taylor, Jr., m. Hazel Boales
4. James Max Taylor m. Claudette Bell
5. James Max Taylor, Jr., b. August 29, 1959

Five living generations are represented in this family.

1. Arcadia Wiggins m. (1) Alex Spencer (2) Joe Davis
2. Florence Spencer m. Americus Wilson Stewart
3. Laudy Stewart m. Velma Taylor
4. Laudell Stewart m. June Callicot
5. Denise and Jerry Lynn Stewart, ages five and three years

Five generations are also represented by the Fred Wooten family.

1. Fred Wooten m. Florence Miller (1876)
2. Elbert Wooten m. Fannie Smith (1900)
3. Floyd Wooten m. Ruth Williams (1924)
4. Clifford Wooten m. Patsy Wilson (1951)
5. Wilson Fred Wooten, age nine years

Mr. Wooten was born in Arkansas, married Miss Florence Miller in 1876. They came to Texas in the early 1890s and settled near Bertram; later moved to Oakalla, and to Briggs about 1915. Mr. Wooten was of jovial disposition, small in stature with a twinkle in his eye, and honest beyond measure. He operated an ice house in Briggs for years, and it was said of him that he was the only man ever to operate a business in Briggs "who never lost a dime." Edwin Harton, who has had a barber-shop in Briggs for thirty years, says that he has shaved, cut the hair, or "dressed the beard" of all five of the Wooten generations.

Five generations are also represented by the James W. Jordan family--in two lines.

1. James W. Jordan m. Elizabeth Horn
2. Sidney Andrew Jordan m. Corilla Dovie Thompson
3. James Roy Jordan m. Vena Williams
4. Leota Jordan m. Marvin A. Daniels
5. Wendell Daniels, age eleven
4. Wincale Jordan m. Barney H. Hill, Jr.
5. Dennis Ray Hill

Five generations of Jubys have made their homes in or around Briggs.

1. Jack Juby m. Fannie Zumpkeller, July 16, 1885
2. John Juby m. Maude Stock, October 20, 1912
3. Ruth Juby m. Hubert M. Carnes, June 4, 1932
4. Helen Delores Carnes m. Lynwood Grant, June 3, 1955
5. Gregory Allan Grant b. November 24, 1957, and
Mark Stephen Grant b. September 29, 1959

FIVE GENERATIONS IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

Two lines of the Columbus Stewart family run through five generations.

1. Columbus Stewart m. Mariah Johnson
2. A. W. Stewart m. Florence Spencer
3. Laudy Stewart m. Velma Taylor
4. Laudell Stewart m. June Callicot
5. Denise and Jerry Lynn Stewart
3. Carl Stewart m. Merle Watson
4. Carla Stewart m. Dean Crooks
5. Mitsi Crooks

But in the Holly-Harton families we can count seven generations--that is, if we count Berry Grissom Taylor who came to Texas in 1875 when he was an old man as the first generation. And see elsewhere for more about the Holly-Harton families.

1. Berry Grissom Taylor m. _____
2. Nancy King Taylor m. William Holly
3. Mary Jane Holly m. John Thomas Harton
4. Lillie Harton m. Thomas H. McCormick
5. Thomas Merton McCormick m. Nelda Watson
6. Tommie Nell McCormick m. Don Hicks
7. Donald Brent Hicks and Gregory Kent Hicks
6. Martha McCormick m. Tim O'Keefe
7. Mary Elise O'Keefe and Susan Lorane O'Keefe

Five generation of Hartons are also represented by this line.

1. John Thomas Harton m. Mary Jane Holly
2. Will T. Harton m. Emma Patterson
3. Iva Harton m. Albert Cloud
4. Shirley Cloud m. John Witcher
5. John and Kathy Witcher, ages four and two years

The G. W. (Dade) Taylor family is represented by six generations.

1. Jesse Taylor m. Jemima _____
2. George Washington Taylor m. Queen U. Maness (1871)
3. Moab S. Taylor m. Eva Hart (1897)
4. Velma Taylor m. Laudy Stewart (1931)
5. Laudell Stewart m. June Callicot (June 14, 1955)
6. Denise and Jerry Linn Stewart

Mr. Jesse Taylor died in a prison camp in Tennessee. His widow, Jemima Taylor, came to Texas with her family. She is buried in the Mill Creek cemetery.

The Hasty family is represented by five generations.

FIVE GENERATIONS IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

1. William Martin Hasty m. Vina Whittenburg
2. Augusta Parmer Hasty m. Mary Ellen Whitley
3. Celesta Hasty m. James Milton Cehand
4. Jamie Cehand m. Clarence Petrick
5. Michael and David Petrick, ages eighteen and sixteen years

Five generations are represented by these families.

1. Andrew Jackson Taylor m. Sarah Jane Stanfield
2. Colista Taylor m. (1) J. C. Jordan, (2) C. O. West
3. Lillian Jordan m. (1) C. W. Cloud, (2) Carl Spinks
4. Mima Ruth Cloud m. Ray Roubideaux
5. Ann Roubideaux, b. February 23, 1959
4. Kelse Cloud m. Peggy Wilson
5. Cynthia Renee, Michael Craig, and Tracy Jean Cloud

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE G. W. ADAMS FAMILY

George Washington Adams and Alice B. Purcell were married December 10, 1891, and settled on what is now known as Adams ranch four and onehalf miles north-east of Briggs. Mr. Adams purchased this property November 10, 1890, and built a house on it previous to their marriage. Ownership of the property still remains in the family.

George Adams, as he was known by everybody, was born in a log cabin on North San Gabriel River, south of where the town of Andice now stands, in Williamson County December 27, 1859. His father and mother were Henry and Sarah Adams who sold their home in Williamson County and bought a small farm of one hundred sixty acres about seven miles northeast of Briggs on Mill Creek August 16, 1880. Henry and Sarah Adams were strong Methodists as the following story told by George Adams to his sons in later years will evidence. When the preacher would come to visit George's home he would always unharness the preacher's horse and feed him. This always reminded him of his experience when a boy. His father Henry would always tell George to unharness Brother So and So's horse and feed him. This was almost a daily chore as their home was headquarters for Methodist circuit riders who often stayed a week or more. George said he made a resolution as a boy that if he ever had a son he would never tell him to unharness and feed a preacher's horse. His sons say that he lived up to this resolution. George made the home of his parents, Henry and Sarah Adams, his headquarters until his purchase of the Adams ranch property referred to above was made in 1890.

Mrs. Adams (Alice Purcell) was born on Brushy Creek near Hutto in Williamson County June 20, 1865, and when about twenty years of age moved with her father and mother, Sam and Sabra Purcell, to what is known as the Purcell homestead, now owned by S. E. Purcell, three miles northwest of Andice in Williamson County.

Four children were born to George and Alice Adams, all of whom are still living, namely: Samuel Russell Adams, Lampasas; Annie Lester Adams (Mrs. Earl L. Williams), Burnet; Georgia Alice Adams (Mrs. E. D. Roberts), Liberty Hill; Henry Hudson Adams, Georgetown.

George Adams depended upon stock-raising and farming as a livelihood many years; he was a breeder of shorthorn cattle. He had spent all of his younger life on the open range working with livestock. He made several trips up the trail driving cattle to northern markets. After 1891 he served for several years as Justice of the Peace in the Briggs-Oakalla district. In 1901, with the assistance of every one in the community, he was instrumental in building a public schoolhouse on his ranch; the school became known as the Adams school. Among the first teachers of this school were Miss Maggie Kincaid, Miss Mae Crozier, Miss Lula Smith, Miss Georgia R. Jones and Miss Bess Pangle. Mr. & Mrs. W. D. Goodwin moved to the community and into the nearest house to the schoolhouse in 1901. They boarded the first school teacher, Miss Maggie Kincaid. The school lasted from November to April. Miss Kincaid paid Mrs. Goodwin \$6.00 per month for room and board. Approximately 30 to 35 pupils attended the school. The Adams school was discontinued many years ago.

THE G. W. ADAMS FAMILY

In order to enroll their children in high school, the Adams family moved to Liberty Hill in 1908 where Mr. Adams purchased an interest in a mercantile business. He later sold this business and went into the cedar business. He later disposed of the cedar business and went into the retail feed business about 1912. In 1915 he expanded by going into the retail grocery business and taking in his son, S. R. Adams, as partner and operating under the name of G. W. Adams & Son. The business was rapidly expanded into a general merchandise operation and the taking in of his other son, H. H. Adams, as partner. January 1, 1920, G. W. Adams sold his interest in the firm to his two sons but continued to manage his other business interests, ranching, etc., until his death October 6, 1944.

Mrs. Alice Adams lived with her daughter Georgia until her death September 19, 1948.

The four children of George and Alice Adams with their families are as follows: S. R. Adams, married Ima Ruth Simmons of Liberty Hill--one daughter, Melba Nadine, now Mrs. T. J. Estes, Jr., of Shreveport, Louisiana; Annie Lester Adams, married Earl L. Williams of Mahomet, who died December 31, 1952--three children: Merkle Q. Williams, Huntington Beach, California, Earline Anthony (Mrs. Vernon Harris), Burnet, Ruth Jeanell (Mrs. Sam Rea), Temple; Georgia Alice Adams, married E. D. Roberts of Liberty Hill--one daughter, Alice Beth (Mrs. Cleo Rodgers), Georgetown; H. H. Adams, married Rowena Montgomery of Midland--four children: George Henry Adams, deceased--Charlie Ray Adams, Georgetown, Mary Ann Adams, Killeen, and Roy Lee Adams, Georgetown.

--S. R. Adams

THE J. W. ADAMS FAMILY

My father was born in Louisiana in 1881 and came to Texas in 1903. His first employment in Texas was in the Sycamore community (now Mahomet) where he was employed as a farm laborer by Jack Williams. My mother was Ida Pearl Smith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor Smith. She was born in Oakalla in 1886 and moved with her parents to their farm about four miles southwest of Briggs when she was about twelve years of age. She attended school at Sycamore. The day of the Briggs tornado she, her mother and sister went to the Jack Williams home for shelter. And it was at this home that she met my father for the first time. They were married in 1907.

My father and mother were the parents of three children: a son Denver H. Adams, born July 15, 1910, and who married Ima South, Ft. Worth, Texas; a son Carl M. Adams, born April 4, 1912, and who married Cepha Millage; a

THE J. W. ADAMS FAMILY

daughter Grace Adams, born October 17, 1915, and who married Barnie L. Daniel of Florence. All were born at our Grandfather Taylor Smith's place west of Briggs.

In 1921 my father bought a place from Dr. Cheatam in the northeast part of Briggs where we lived until the three children were married. In the latter part of 1921 or the early part of 1922 my father bought a model T truck and started the first motor freight line from Lampasas to Austin. He would go to Lampasas on Mondays and Thursdays and to Austin on Tuesdays and Fridays. In going to Austin he would leave about 4:00 a. m. and return about 10:00 p. m.--about 16 hours for the round trip of 90 miles and loading and unloading of freight. On November 23, 1925, while he was hauling feed from the Will Weeks place west of Briggs to our place in Briggs he fell under the wagon and was dragged for 150 yards or more. His injuries proved fatal two days later. My mother passed away on December 6, 1933.

In the early 1930s we had what we called a "free show" every other Saturday night. Local talent would furnish the music and in other ways entertain vast crowds. It was at the last of these free shows that my wife and I were married--on November 4, 1933. It was estimated that 1,500 people attended this last show and our wedding. We have been blessed with three fine children: two girls and a boy.

--Carl M. Adams

THE J. M. CEHAND FAMILY

James Milton Cehand was born in Marble Falls, Texas, on April 25, 1891. His father was William C. Cehand (February 19, 1852--June 17, 1926); his mother Sarah Angeline Davidson Cehand (June 27, 1871--April 21, 1915). He was married to Miss Celesta Hasty in Briggs on March 3, 1912. They were the parents of one daughter, Jamie, who married Clarence Petrick on September 23, 1941. There are two grandsons, Michael and David Petrick. Mr. Cehand died May 3, 1959, and was buried in Burnet.

When he was quite young Mr. Cehand's parents moved to the Oatmeal community where he started to school in 1898. The family moved to Briggs in the fall or summer of 1906 and settled on the Gann place on Mill Creek. It was there and in Briggs that he lived until he moved to Burnet in 1940. Mr. Cehand farmed a good part of his life. In later years he served as deputy sheriff of Burnet County and as city marshall of Burnet.

Mr. Cehand was one of the most kindly disposed men who have ever lived in Briggs--or Burnet County. He made friends easily--and kept them. He was

THE J. M. CEHAND FAMILY

held in high esteem by all who knew him, was active in church and community affairs, and had a good word for everyone. Of him it can truly be said that he never saw a stranger in his life. And the good that he did in his quiet, unassuming way can only be known when the ledgers of the Eternal are balanced.

--E.L.

THE J. E. CLIFTON FAMILY

Those of us who went to school in Briggs in the early 1900s will remember an amiable youngster named J. E. (Johnnie) Clifton. (In the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School he appears in the picture of the school for the year 1903-04.) Mr. Clifton was born of parents of normal stature. But somehow or other the characters which make for normality in physical well-being went awry in his case--he remained a midget. But that seemed to cause him little trouble in his associations with other people. He was--we should say is--affable, courteous, of good disposition; and in these latter days insists that his memory is that of a short man!

While we are interested in his having a page in this history, we are also interested in him for two other reasons: He never let his size interfere with his making his way in this world--and there are three generations of midgets in his family.

For years Mr. Clifton worked as "Buster Brown" for the Brown Shoe Company. In proper "attire" and with his dog "Tige," he traveled the length and breadth of the country, making every hamlet and city which had an outlet for the Brown Company products. He later "worked" the Chicago Centennial Exposition, the San Diego fair and the Texas Centennial in Dallas. Still later he was employed in the state treasurer's office in Austin. Now retired and in his early seventies--he was born December 25, 1888--he lives with his family in Austin.

Our second interest--and that of scientists as well--lies in the fact that there are three generations of midgets in his family. Mr. Clifton was married to the former Miss Selecta Cumpston (born January 6, 1902) of Clovis, New Mexico, on January 21, 1925. Both midgets, they had two children--both midgets--a son and a daughter. The son died when still quite young; the daughter Myrna Merle, born February 25, 1926, grew to young womanhood and on June 29, 1945, was married to Mr. A. C. Swensen--a midget. The Swensens have three children: Nancy Gayle, born June 14, 1946; Carroll Darleen, born October 29, 1948; Donna Lee, born October 27, 1950. Donna Lee seems to be the only grandchild who will defy whatever trait it was that made midgets of the others--she apparently is growing up to be of normal stature.

THE J. E. CLIFTON FAMILY

So far as is known the Clifton family is the only family of three generations of midgets known to science.

* * *

Note. The reference to Mr. Clifton's memory being that of a short man refers to a statement of his in a letter dated April 8, 1959. After recounting briefly some of his recollections of his early years in Briggs, he concluded his letter with these words: "I guess my memory is no longer than I am."

THE W. E. CLINKSCALES FAMILY

William Edward Clinkscales, son of B. T. and Clarissa Clinkscales, was born at Wild Hollow, South Carolina, August 9, 1873. He came to Texas in his early youth, stopping first at Georgetown and reaching the Gum Springs community in 1896 or 1897. He worked first in Mr. J. W. Edgar's general store in Taylor's Gin. Later in association with his father-in-law, Mr. Marcus (Mark) Patterson, and other business men he organized and became general manager of the W. E. Clinkscales & Company. When that company was dissolved years later he established a grocery store and became postmaster, a position which he held for upwards of twenty-five years. Mr. Clinkscales also served as a school trustee and always took an active part in community affairs.

Mr. Clinkscales was married to Miss Mary Patterson on December 29, 1901. They were the parents of one son, Horace Clinkscales, who married Miss Wilma McBride, daughter of Mance and Elizabeth McBride of Killeen, and who remains in business in Briggs and also serves as postmaster. Mrs. Wilma Clinkscales has been for a number of years a teacher in the Briggs public school system.

Mr. W. E. Clinkscales died December 27, 1948, Mrs. Clinkscales on November 11, 1951.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE C. A. CLOUD FAMILY

The following sketch of Charles Alexander Cloud appeared in the "West Texas Pioneers" section of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram for July 2, 1961. It is reproduced here with the permission of the Star-Telegram.

NATIVE WHO DIED RECENTLY AT 99
WAS COWBOY AND CATTLEMAN
By Pauline Naylor

Charles Alexander Cloud, who died recently at the home of a daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Franklin of Visalia, Cal., at the age of 99 years, 3½ months, was born in Austin County, Texas, where his grandfather, Clark Cloud, had settled near the end of the Mexican War.

Cloud had told his life story as a Texas cowboy, cattle raiser, and farmer to a granddaughter, Mrs. Geneva Shelton of Inglewood, Cal., and had asked that she see that the story of his death be sent to the Star-Telegram.

"The Star-Telegram was his favorite newspaper, even when he was spending much time in his later years with children in California," the granddaughter writes. "He especially was interested in the coverage of governmental and political news. Also since he was born, reared and spent most of his life in Texas, there are numerous relatives, close friends and business acquaintances of his family, as well as himself, living within the area the Star-Telegram covers."

Charles Alexander Cloud's father, also Charles Alexander, died in 1866, when the son, next to the youngest of the family, was four. His mother, the former Miss Jane Calvert, was also of Austin County. Their marriage took place in Austin County in 1854, and five children were born to them. The oldest, Thomas, was 11 when his father died at the age of 39. The youngest, Lula, was two.

Charles was reared on cattle ranches in Waller, Harris and Brazoria counties. In his schooling, he said, he "went through McGuffey's Fourth Reader."

He also told how, when he was 13, he "got on a horse and rode off to work for Alec P. Fisher, the best cowman in South Texas." He worked for Fisher for a number of years, becoming known as "a graceful front rider." Later he worked for Capt. Ralston, a Civil War officer, and was known as "Ralston's Cowboy." After working for Ralston he went to Williamson County and worked for Russell and Anderson. From Williamson County he went to Burnet County.

In 1885 he was told that "a Mrs. Ney, whose husband was Dr. Montgomery, had bought all of the 7P brand cattle and needed a good cowman to gather them up for her, and that Dr. Montgomery had told her 'Get Eck Cloud, he's a good rider and cutter.'"

This 'Mrs. Ney' was the internationally famous sculptor Elisabet Ney, who with her scholarly Scottish husband, Dr. George Montgomery, had come to Texas from Europe with ambitious plans for a cattle ranch, as well as pursuing their artistic and cultural careers. Their ranch was at Hempstead. This was before she opened her studio in Austin, which now is the Elisabet Ney Museum.

THE C. A. CLOUD FAMILY

While Eck Cloud was on his way to see Mrs. Ney about the job he passed a spot on a creek where a Baptist preacher was conducting a baptismal service. In the group that was singing he saw a pretty blackhaired girl. He asked some boys, who were sitting on the creek bank, with their feet in the water, who the pretty girl was.

"That's Nettie Grimes," they told him. He went on his way to the job, telling himself, "I'll get myself a suit of clothes, and then find someone to introduce us." The clothes cost \$35, which was quite a tidy sum in 1885. He found a young man, a teacher in the community, to introduce him to Henrietta Ophelia Grimes, and later hired a buggy for \$3 a day so he could take her riding.

They were married in Hempstead in July 1886, a little more than a year after their meeting. He was 24, and his bride was 19. Thirteen children were born to them, one of whom died when five days old. Three others have died since their mother died, in October 1941.

In 1889 Eck Cloud left the cattle business and began farming in partnership with his father-in-law. Later he returned to working cattle, and eventually returned to Burnet County where he bought a 150-acre stock farm.

In 1907 he moved to Taylor County, where he farmed until 1928, when he moved to Morton, Cochran County. He and his wife lived there until her death.

After 1941 he divided his time among his children in Texas and California. He made his home at various times with his twin daughters, Mrs. Hettie Middleton and Mrs. Hester Daniel of Graham, with Mrs. Willie Rose of Morton and Mrs. Myrtle Franklin of Visalia, Cal., with whom he was living at the time of his death.

Others of his nine surviving children are: Mmes. Ruth Watts of Morton and Eva Hurst of Strathmore, California, Miss Inez Cloud of Exeter, Cal., Oscar Cloud of Visalia and Jake Cloud of San Diego. There are 38 grandchildren, 58 great-grandchildren and 16 great-great-grandchildren.

Cloud's biography, dictated to his granddaughter, Mrs. Shelton, summed up the passing of the era of the cattleman, the cowboy and the longhorn, into which he was born. He said:

"In 1856 the State of Texas agreed to give 16 sections of land for each mile of railroad which companies were to build from the Sabine River to Houston, and from Houston to Waco. The railroad was to be in operation for 30 years before the deed to the land was given. In 1886 settlers began coming, the land was fenced and the longhorn era, waning since the advent of the railroads, finally was over."

* * *

THE C. A. CLOUD FAMILY

To this sketch of the life of Charles Alexander Cloud we may add that the home in which Mr. and Mrs. Cloud were living at the time was completely demolished by the tornado which swept through Briggs late in the afternoon of April 12, 1906. Not one stick of lumber was left standing. Only the floor of one room remained intact. And in that room Mrs. Cloud had huddled together twelve children as soon as she became aware of what was happening. Some of the children were her own; others were pupils who had left the schoolhouse only minutes earlier and had stopped in to get out of the storm. Mrs. Cloud held her six-weeks-old daughter in her arms. When the child was found later she was under debris of the wreck and completely unharmed! In a letter dated January 2, 1961, this same daughter made reference to the tornado as follows: "I was the one who was blown out of mother's arms. I was named for Inez Gladys Hickman." (Miss Hickman was visiting her sister Mrs. R. A. Patterson at the time. The Patterson home was also completely demolished and Miss Hickman died several weeks later from injuries which she received in the tornado.) Mr. Cloud and his son Oscar were working in the field about three-fourths of a mile away when the tornado passed them. They were unaware of any danger until they heard children screaming as they made their way home.

--E.L.

THE T. C. CLOUD FAMILY

Most of the information contained in these notes was related to me by my uncle, Charles Alexander Cloud, Jr., who now resides with his daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Cloud Franklin, near Exeter, California. He was 99 years old on January 15, 1961.

In 1845, soon after Texas was admitted to the Union, Clark Cloud came from Montgomery, Alabama, and settled in Austin County, Texas. He bought a tract of the Mexican headright grants which could be had in exchange for a pair of brogans or a jug of whiskey.

The children of Clark Cloud were: Bill Cloud, who settled in Milam County; Jake Cloud, who settled in Blanco County; J. A. Cloud, who settled in Comanche County; George Washington Cloud, who settled in Austin County and whose wife was Adeline McDade.

Charles Alexander Cloud, Sr. was the son of George Washington Cloud and married Jane Elizabeth Calvert. My father, Thomas Caldwell Cloud, was the oldest child of this union and was born near Buckhorn, Austin County, Texas, on September 22, 1856. Jane Elizabeth Calvert's father was Major George Calvert but it is not known whether the "Major" was a first name or a military title.

THE T. C. CLOUD FAMILY

Thomas Caldwell Cloud and Alabama Lucinda (Allie) Wyms were married in Belton, Texas, on January 1, 1883. Soon thereafter they moved to Burnet County, bought land and settled about five miles north of present-day Briggs. All of their eight children were born on this ranch. In the early 1900s they moved to a place about two miles southeast of Briggs, near where the Mt. Moriah cemetery is now located. They lived there but a short time, then moved to a farm and ranch about two and one half miles west of Briggs. They sold this place in 1942 and moved to Lampasas, Texas, on January 1, 1943, where they lived the remainder of their lives. Thomas Caldwell Cloud died on September 6, 1943; Alabama Lucinda (Allie) Cloud on November 6, 1947. She was the daughter of George Washington Wyms and Jane Elizabeth Holloway Wyms and was born in Freestone County, Texas, October 7, 1863.

--Mrs. Florice Cloud Williams

THE HOMER DEWOLF FAMILY

Mr. Homer DeWolf (May 11, 1847--March 21, 1922) was born in Johnstown, Ohio, the son of Harding and Flora DeWolf. He was married to Miss Martha Hill (June 21, 1852--March 21, 1909), daughter of Andrew and Mima Hill, on February 14, 1870. The family came to Texas in 1884 and lived first in the Sycamore Springs area (in the vicinity of Mahomet). They built a two-story home in 1887 a little over a mile east of the present site of Briggs. The home was destroyed by fire about 1910, but through the courtesy of Mrs. Mima DeWolf Powell of Goldthwaite we are able to reproduce a photograph of it on Plate 11. A more detailed description of the home is given elsewhere under the heading "The Homer DeWolf Home." Mr. and Mrs. DeWolf were the parents of seven children.

Rose DeWolf (October 23, 1872--May 31, 1959); married W. H. Kirk on November 9, 1904. Taught in the Gum Springs (Briggs) school 1894--1896. Lived in San Angelo from 1905 until her death in 1959.

Hill DeWolf (December 22, 1875--May 3, 1956); married Miss Genie Griffin of Briggs on June 1, 1900. Engaged in ranching and livestock interests all of his life. Three children: two sons, one daughter.

Bessie DeWolf (October 10, 1880--March 13, 1930); married W. A. West of Briggs on June 10, 1901. Three children: two sons, one daughter.

Floy DeWolf (August 21, 1883--); married John W. Blamer of Johnstown, Ohio, in San Angelo, Texas, on March 13, 1913. Three children: two sons, one daughter. Lives in Johnstown, Ohio.

THE HOMER DEWOLF FAMILY

Mabel DeWolf (March 8, 1887--); married J. H. Saylor of Goldthwaite, Texas, on January 9, 1924. One son. Lives in Goldthwaite, Texas.

Hardy DeWolf (December 9, 1890--); married (1) Nita Howell in 1920; (2) Ruby Davis in 1952. One son, George Harding DeWolf. Lives in San Angelo.

Mima DeWolf (July 25, 1893--); married George W. Powell of Fort Worth on May 25, 1924. Lives in Goldthwaite.

Mr. and Mrs. DeWolf sold their ranch near Briggs in 1907 to Mr. W. S. Dillingham. They moved to San Angelo where they purchased a ranch south of town but made their home in the city. There they spent the rest of their lives.

--Mrs. George W. Powell
(nee Mima DeWolf)

The DeWolf family were honorable and upright people. Mr. DeWolf was a public-spirited citizen who worked incessantly for the betterment of his community. He served for a number of years as a member of the local school board; he donated the tract of land for what for seventy years has been known as the DeWolf cemetery. --E. L.

THE DILLINGHAM FAMILIES

John and Lucy Woodward Dillingham came to Texas from Tennessee in 1854 and settled in Travis County where they spent the rest of their lives engaged in farming and ranching. They were the parents of eleven children, six boys, and five girls.

Clementine, the oldest, married Frank Tombaugh; they were the parents of four boys and one girl.

William S., married Miss Missouri Killen of Fayette County on December 12, 1880; they were the parents of three children: Clarence, Eulalia, Leila. Mr. Dillingham died in 1944, Mrs. Dillingham in 1920; both are buried in the DeWolf cemetery.

Annett, married C. D. Morris; parents of two children: Burton, Maggie Lou.

J. Logan, married Miss Rosie Price; parents of four children: Addison, Sidney, William, Anne.

Maggie, married J. N. Wells; two daughters: Eva and Lucile.

THE DILLINGHAM FAMILIES

J. Pickens, married Miss Thella Williams.

J. Sidney, married Miss Maggie Roberts; three children: Ellen, Roberts, Georgie.

Lee, married George Saunders; three sons, one daughter: Hester, Jewel, Joe, Allie May.

H. Newton, married Miss Annie Mueller; two children: John H. and Helen.

George W., married Miss Florence Schultz; one son, three daughters: Cecil, Grace, Leah, Virginia.

Sudie M., married R. L. McDonald; three sons, one daughter: John, Robert, Durham, Lois.

W. S. Dillingham came to the community of Gum Springs in 1885. He bought a large acreage of land lying some three miles north of present-day Briggs, and there reared his family of three children. His oldest child and only son, Clarence, married Miss Henrietta Woodbury August 9, 1905, and was the father of three children: Lorena, who died at the age of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years; Sherwood, who died in 1937 at the age of 23; Blanche, who was married to Jack E. Mabe, and is the mother of one son, Jackie D. Mabe. The second child, daughter Eulalia, was married to Walter Dinningham of Tennessee in 1918, and is the mother of two children: Rayma, married to Jack Terry of Austin and the mother of a son John and a daughter Rayma Lynn; a son W. C., married to Bettie Brinkley of Brownwood, and the father of three children: Susanne, Janice, W. C. Jr.; superintendent of the high school at Brook-Smith. Leila, the youngest of the three children, is married to C. P. Cloud of Lampasas and is the mother of a son, Weldon, married to Dorothy Motheral, and the father of two sons: Robert Carl, married to Pauline Stephens of McAllen, and Scott; a daughter Dorothy, married to Jerry Norwood of Austin, and the mother of a daughter Cathy and a son David.

Sometime before 1910 Mr. W. S. Dillingham purchased the DeWolf ranch which, together with his original purchases, remains in the family name today.

James Sidney Dillingham, a younger brother of W. S. Dillingham, purchased land near that of his brother in 1898 and was a successful stock farmer, his principal interest being the raising of fine sheep. He was married to Miss Maggie Roberts, daughter of Robert Milo and Cory Murphy Roberts. Her mother having died when she was a mere child, she lived in the governor's mansion with her grandparents Governor and Mrs. O. M. Roberts during his term in office. Mr. and Mrs. Dillingham were the parents of three children: Ellen, Sidney Roberts, Georgie Milo. The family homestead is still in the possession of the living children. The parents are buried in the DeWolf or Dillingham cemetery.

THE DILLINGHAM FAMILIES

Sidney Roberts Dillingham was born May 20, 1894, and married Miss Harriett Evelyn Skaggs on December 23, 1913. Except for the few years they lived in Lampasas, they have made their home in Briggs. He was for a number of years engaged in the general mercantile business but of late he has devoted most of his time to managing his farming and ranching interests. Mr. and Mrs. Dillingham are active in the Baptist church, give generously of their time to community interests, and support liberally many charitable causes. He was a member of the county draft board during World War II and was awarded a badge of merit for his faithful service.

Georgie Milo Dillingham was born December 7, 1897, and was married to Miss Ruth Watson in 1918. They were the parents of three daughters: Elaine, wife of Stanley P. Hanson and mother of a son Wendell Rollins; Mary Evelyn, wife of Jack Montgomery and mother of a daughter Lynda Jill; Joy Ruth, wife of Douglass Michel and mother of a son Douglass, Jr.. Mr. Dillingham died November 4, 1956, and is buried in the DeWolf or Dillingham cemetery.

--W. C. Dillingham

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE M. N. DRAPER FAMILY

The Draper family first came to America about 1600, probably from Yorkshire, England. The name derives from an occupation--"draper," a manufacturer of cloth.

Milton N. Draper (February 26, 1843--October 30, 1929), son of Thomas Lyle Draper (1793--1865), was married to Cornelia Tomlinson (July 26, 1850--July 18, 1909) in October 1875. To them were born two children: Brison T. Draper, born April 6, 1889, and Hasie Draper, born in August 1890.

Brison T. Draper married Verna Obenhaus (born March 18, 1900) December 22, 1920, and to them was born a daughter Beverly who married G. L. Jarvis and has one daughter Ann. Hasie Draper married R. H. O'Bryant and has no children.

M. N. Draper came to Texas from Missouri in 1873. In his early life he was a schoolteacher, having taught in four states--Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Texas. Soon after his coming to Texas he taught a school near Liberty Hill when one of his pupils was a young fellow named Joseph Neely Matthews. When Mr. Matthews came to Briggs in 1900 as principal of the school one of the first men whom he looked up was his former teacher, to whom he said: "You taught me when I was a very young lad; now I will teach your son when he is not yet in his teens."

THE M. N. DRAPER FAMILY

M. N. Draper and his young wife came to the community of Gum Springs in 1879. Their first house was built of "rawhide" lumber sawed on the Lampasas River. The term "rawhide" derived from the fact that a log was simply ripped into slabs, thus leaving the bark along the edges. This meant that a piece of lumber might be eight inches wide at one end and a foot wide at the other. This variation made no difference for roof construction but some effort had to be made to "work a piece over" for walls and partitions. Shortly thereafter a second home was built and the first used as a barn. The second home is still standing though vacant at this time. While in the community of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs (1879 to 1907) Mr. Draper's principal interests were ranching and some farming. He served a term or two as a trustee of the Gum Springs school. The family moved to Uvalde County in 1907 and later to Odem where Mr. Draper died in 1929. He served through the Civil War in the Confederacy.

I remember quite vividly my first day in school--and for two reasons. The first is that I started to school on my eighth birthday--April 6, 1897; the second is that a terrific hailstorm blew up early in the afternoon. My starting to school in the spring was due to the fact that the regular term was over and Miss Alice West had begun a "subscription" school which would run another month or two.

--B. T. Draper

THE M. S. DWYER FAMILY

Marion Samuel Dwyer, familiarly known to everyone as "Dash," was born near Killeen on November 8, 1883, the son of Timothy and Vina Black Dwyer. His father was born in Ireland, his mother a native Texan. Other children besides "Dash" were John, Will, Robert, Dan, Isabell.

John Dwyer married Lizzie Mecom--one daughter, Annie Mecom Ellen who married Edwin Elms and has a son Clinton.

Will Dwyer married Annie Hallmark--one daughter, Blanche.

Robert W. Dwyer married Betty Patterson.

Dan Dwyer died in 1948.

Isabell Dwyer married Huley Edwards.

THE M. S. DWYER FAMILY

Marion Samuel Dwyer married Miss Dora B. Daniels on February 22, ¹⁹⁰⁷~~1909~~—one son Marion Denver Dwyer, born November 9, 1909; three grandchildren, Nila Syble, Tony and Mike Dwyer.

Mrs. M. S. Dwyer, called "Dode" by her countless friends, was born May 14, 1891, and is the daughter of James H. and Tabitha Daniels. She is a woman of unusual charm and intelligence and is noted for her desire to help and accommodate others. Other members of her family: Cora, married Jack Taylor; Dessie, married Frank Yancey; Ellen, married Walter Stubblefield; Leona, married Ollie Stubblefield; Inman, married Emma Russell; Jesse, married May Gray; T. O., married _____ Everett.

Mr. M. S. Dwyer was a successful farmer of Briggs for many, many years. He died January 29, 1958, and was buried in the Mill Creek cemetery. His widow and son now reside in Jollyville.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE SANFORD (DOCK) WILLIAMS FAMILY

Sanford (Dock) Williams was born March 12, 1879, in Blueboll, Arkansas; married Miss Allie Cox (February 3, 1888--April 6, 1940), daughter of Andrew and Mary Greer Cox, in Mahomet in 1906. They were the parents of two daughters: Virgie, at home with her father; Edna, who married Richard Fraley and has two sons, Robert DeWayne and David Allen Fraley. Mr. Williams came to Texas when he was a young man. He lived at Mahomet for many years but moved to near Briggs about 1912; he moved into Briggs in 1935.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE J. W. EDGAR FAMILY

James William Edgar was born in Henderson County, Tennessee, June 9, 1853, and came to the community of Gum Springs in the 1880s. He was married to Sallie Morris (July 10, 1869--December 9, 1934) on December 14, 1890. He died in Burnet September 18, 1926. Mr. and Mrs. Edgar were the parents of four children: Robert Morris, born at Taylor's Gin November 25, 1895; Ruby

THE J. W. EDGAR FAMILY

Mahala (Mae), born at Briggs October 12, 1899; James Winfred, born at Briggs September 15, 1904; Donald Fowler, born at Burnet March 17, 1914.

Robert Morris Edgar married Mabel Agnes Low June 11, 1916, and lives in Brownwood. They were the parents of two children: Robert Morris, Jr., and Wanda Rae Edgar. Robert Morris Edgar, Jr., was killed in action on Okinawa May 13, 1945, while serving in the Infantry in World War II.

Ruby Mahala (Mae) Edgar married G. O. Lowe in Burnet on November 29, 1933. Widowed, she lives in Burnet, her husband having died on April 3, 1949.

James Winfred Edgar married Sue B. Oakley August 27, 1927. They were the parents of three children: Frances Ruth, Sarah Elizabeth and Susan Elaine. James Winfred Edgar received the B. A. degree from Howard Payne College in 1928, the M. A. and D. Ed. degrees from the University of Texas in 1938 and 1948. He was a teacher in and superintendent of various Texas public schools from 1923 to 1950; currently Commissioner of Education, the state of Texas.

Donald Fowler Edgar married Claudia Pauline Summers March 9, 1939. They were the parents of two children: Judy Morris and Don Rodney (Roddy) Edgar. Donald Fowler Edgar died in Burnet October 31, 1956.

James William Edgar was one of the first to establish a general mercantile store in the community which is today known as Briggs. Sometime in the late 1880s or early 1890s he bought and enlarged the general store originally established by Mr. Stephen Taylor, an establishment which he owned and operated until selling it to the Ratliff-Moore Company in November 1912. Mr. Edgar was a public-spirited citizen, giving unstintingly of his time and talents in furthering the welfare of his community. He served for several terms as a school trustee and was for years a deacon in the Baptist Church where he was a teacher in and superintendent of the Sunday school. Mrs. Edgar also taught in the Sunday school and played the organ for both church and school services.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Edgar were active in church and community affairs all of their lives.

--Mrs. G. O. Lowe
(nee Mae Edgar)

THE G. T. FEWELL FAMILY

Granderson Theodore Fewell (July 17, 1842--February 29, 1916) was born in South Carolina. In his early years he worked in a machine shop at Water Valley, Mississippi, and for a while was a locomotive engineer on some line in that state. He was a Confederate veteran, at first in Hood's Texas Brigade, which was partly made up of Mississippi regiments, and later with Lee around Richmond. He was captured at Gettysburg and imprisoned on an island off the coast of New Jersey. His health failed and he was exchanged but he was in the final battles around Petersburg.

Mr. Fewell was married to Eugenia Rosalina Reese (January 1, 1853--August 29, 1920) on December 22, 1868. They were the parents of six children: Walter Oscar, Maud Clarence, Willie Lee, all born in Mississippi; Jesse Eugene, born in Florence; Harry Leslie, born at Gum Springs or nearby; Pearl, born at Gum Springs.

Marriages of Fewell children which are related in one way or another to the story of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs include those of Walter to Paralee Haney, Maud to M. L. Langford, and Pearl to Justin A. Edgar.

The Fewells came to Gum Springs in the late 1870s and all of the children except Pearl attended the old Gum Springs school.

Mr. Fewell was trained as a mechanic and during the forty years or so he lived in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs he worked practically every ginning season as engineer at the West gin, or at gins in neighboring communities.

--E.L.

THE J. T. HALL FAMILY

Jesse Thomas Hall, son of Jesse Thomas and Minerva Culp Hall, was born in Missouri March 16, 1868. He married Clara Emogene Beach (March 9, 1874--September 5, 1954) of Belton, Texas, daughter of Jay Frank Beach and Paralee Jane Beach, in Youngsport, Texas, March 27, 1901. They were the parents of three children: Jessie Merle (December 27, 1901--July 1, 1913), Leone Mae (November 23, 1903--), Alberta Paralee (August 5, 1911--), all born in Briggs.

Leone Mae Hall married Marvin Orbrian Ellason (January 9, 1900--) of Briggs on October 26, 1926--two children, a daughter Joye Juanelle, a son Orbrian Duane.

Joye Juanelle Ellason was born in Breckenridge, Texas, May 2, 1929; married (1) A. M. Mosher, Jr.--three daughters: Sheri Lyn, born March 23, 1947; Sunny Denise, born February 24, 1948; Susan Carol, born February 7, 1950; married (2) John Bacon Alexander, Jr.--two daughters: Summer DeLayne, born

THE J. T. HALL FAMILY

July 13, 1954; Stacy Ann, born April 27, 1959.

Orbrian Duane Ellason was born in Sayre, Oklahoma, November 4, 1934; married Ima Jane Cruse (December 12, 1936--) on February 6, 1954--two sons: Stephen Douglas, born September 9, 1957, Raymond Alan, born August 9, 1958.

Alberta Paralee Hall married John Wesley Brown (July 12, 1906--) of Lampasas, Texas, January 9, 1933; no children.

Counting the time that she carried on after his death, my father and mother were in business in Briggs for more than fifty years. My father was post-master for twenty-two years; he was appointed January 9, 1899, and served until he was succeeded by Mr. W. E. Clinkscales on August 21, 1920. Mother operated the business for about fifteen years following my father's death. She finally sold the business in September 1945 but continued to make her home in Briggs until November 1952. Her health began to fail about that time and Alberta and I persuaded her to come to Dallas with us. She loved her home and the people of Briggs--and was in turn loved by them. She and father are both buried in Briggs where they lived so long, honored and respected by all who knew them.

Like so many others, my father suffered severe injuries in the tornado of April 12, 1906. His store was practically wrecked and its stock of goods all but lost. (See photograph of wreckage elsewhere. E.L.) Once he recovered from his injuries, he rebuilt his store building and continued actively in business until he suffered a heart attack in 1927. He died December 20, 1931.

My father was a public-spirited citizen. Next to his family and home he loved his community. He served on the board of trustees of the school, was a director of the Briggs State Bank, a life-long member of the Methodist Church; and in many other ways gave generously of his time and talents in making Briggs the fine little town it came to be.

If I may add a personal note, it would be to say that both Alberta and I attended the Briggs school and graduated there. I graduated in 1920, Alberta in 1926. Alberta later attended Breckenridge High School, graduating there in 1929.

--Mrs. M. O. Ellason
(nee Leone Mae Hall)

THE M. D. HALL FAMILY

Mordecai Dalton Hall (February 2, 1858--May 17, 1934) was born in Bonham, Texas, the son of Jesse Thomas and Minerva Culp Hall. He was one of ten children: George, John, Mordecai, Ben, Tom, Dick, John, Julia, Rose, Mattie. He was married in 1887 to Rhoda Jane Berry (July 12, 1860--January 12, 1938), granddaughter of John Berry who settled in Williamson County in 1845 and for whom Berry Creek is named. Mr. and Mrs. Hall were the parents of eight children: Una Marie (July 4, 1888--), Allie Peach (July 12, 1889--May 15, 1918), Horace Greeley (April 17, 1891--March 24, 1901), Mamie Pearl (January 13, 1896--), Myrtle Madge (August 12, 1893--March 21, 1957), Grace Lola (March 12, 1899--), Lillian Orene (January 2, 1905--). Mrs. Hall by a previous marriage had a daughter Maud Rainey (September 12, 1884--July 4, 1915).

Una Marie Hall was born in Junction, Texas, but entered school in Taylor's Gin following the removal of her parents there in 1893. She was graduated from Baylor Female College in Belton in 1909 with a B. A. degree; she received an M. A. degree in 1932 from the National University of Mexico. The four years following her graduation from Baylor Female College she taught Latin and Greek in the Rusk Academy, Rusk, Texas--a Baptist institution whose name was later changed to Rusk College, and which closed at the end of the school year 1927-1928. Until she retired in 1945 she taught in various public schools in Texas, in the Wichita Falls Junior College, and in Hardin Junior College where she was head of the language department. One of her "A" students in Greek while she was at Rusk was W. R. White, now president of Baylor University. She was married to Henry Thomas Gilbert on February 4, 1933, and now resides in Wichita Falls.

Allie Peach Hall was born in Sonora, Texas, but started to school in Briggs. She was married to Jack Matkins in 1910.

Horace Greeley Hall died when about ten years of age and was buried in the DeWolf (Dillingham) cemetery at Briggs.

Myrtle Madge Hall married Alvin Ray Adams and had three children: Evelyn, who married Michael Carl Gollback; Norma, who married John King Knudson; Alvin Ray, Jr., who married Jeanne Carol Huelke; and one grandchild, Leigh Ann Adams.

Mamie Pearl Hall married first Guy Roselle on October 3, 1918; second, W. D. Moorman on November 30, 1932. She had one daughter Francille, who married Neubert Florence on December 22, 1942; two grandchildren, Freddy Roy (adopted) and Darrell Mack Florence.

Grace Lola Hall married Emmett Bilbrey and had nine children: Nellie, Myrtle Lee, Herman, Mary, Grace, Earl, Bobby, Roy, and Betty.

Jesse Thomas Hall married Alda Gann and had one daughter Doris who married Robert Wilson Irwin; two grandchildren, Nancy Elaine and Susan Jane Irwin.

Lillian Orene Hall married C. W. Welch and had one daughter Betty Loretta who married W. H. Britton.

THE M. D. HALL FAMILY

Maud Rainey, daughter of Mrs. M. D. Hall by a previous marriage, was born in Baird, Texas; married Robert M. Pearce, and had four children: a son who died when about two years of age; Lila Lee, Romeo, Neal.

--Mrs. Una Marie Gilbert
(nee Una Marie Hall)

THE W. M. HASTY FAMILY

William Martin Hasty was born in North Carolina in 1804, married Vina Whittenburg, and moved to Alabama. To this union were born the following children: Annie, James Andrew, Benjamin Wesley, John Alvie, Mary, Robert, William Whittenburg, Joseph Smith, Augusta Parmer, Joshua, Mattie. Mary and Robert died when young.

Free land in Texas was a drawing card for all pioneers and the Hasty family proved no exception. So they joined a wagon train to Texas. They suffered many hardships along the way, but the Mississippi with its quicksands proved to be their greatest problem. Days were required to cut brush and get the wagons across. But once with the Mississippi behind them, they settled near Cherokee in East Texas. Finding this area generally dissatisfactory, they moved on to Williamson County where the children were married and raised their families--with the exception of Joshua who went on a cattle drive to Kansas and was never heard from again. The family often wondered if he were killed by Indians or did he drift on to another state.

William Whittenburg Hasty married Mary Tomlinson in 1860 and came to the community of Gum Springs that same year. They had one son, William L. Hasty, who married Emma Taber--both of whom appear in Ernest Langford's First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. William L. died soon after his marriage, his mother somewhat later, thus leaving his father to live by himself.

Augusta Parmer Hasty was born in 1849 and was married first to Serrena Parker. To this marriage were born Vina Elizabeth, Mary, Nannie, Alvin, (died in infancy), William Walter, Pearl. His second wife was Mary Ellen Whitley, whom he married in 1884. To them were born Virginia, Tennie, Celesta, Alta, Ruth. He moved to Briggs in 1902 and lived with his brother William Whittenburg Hasty until the latter's death. He then bought his deceased brother's home and lived there until 1914, when he moved to the old Ramsey nursery near Joppa. He returned to Briggs in 1921 where he lived until his death in October 1934. His wife Mary Ellen Hasty died February 13, 1942.

THE W. M. HASTY FAMILY

Vina Elizabeth Hasty married Lawrence Champlin and to them were born Velma, Ernest, Carl, Indus, Florence, Bessie, Allie, Vesta.

Mary Hasty married Arthur Gray and to them were born Bertha, Clara, Claude Ethel, Pearl, William, Alvie, August.

Nannie Hasty married Jake Ward and to them were born William Roy, Pearl, Nora, Bertha, George.

William Walter Hasty married Lena Dungan and to them were born Leon, Elwyn, Thelma, John.

Pearl Hasty married John Wright and to them were born Walter, Elmo, Ann, Alleen, Carl.

Of the children of Augusta Parmer and Mary Ellen Whitley Hasty, Alta married Clarence Milliam. To Celesta's marriage to James Milton Cehand was born a daughter Jamie, who married Clarence Petrick and had two sons, Michael Vernon and David Vincent; to Alta's marriage was born a daughter Mary Alice who married Edward Shans.

The Hasty sisters of Briggs still have in their possession the original "Soldiers Discharge" from the Army of the Confederate States of their uncle, William Whittenburg Hasty. It is dated April 11, 1863, and reads in part as follows:

SOLDIERS DISCHARGE

To all whom it may concern.

Know Ye, That W. W. Hasty a private of Captain D. V. Grants Company ("G"), Allens Regiment of Texas Volunteer Infantry, who was enlisted the first day of July One thousand eight hundred and Sixty Two, To serve during the war, is hereby Honorably discharged from the Army of The Confederate States, By order of Major Gent Walker, granted on Surgeons Certificate of Disability.

Said W. W. Hasty was born in Talledga County, Alabama, is twenty-three years of age, six feet high, fair complexion, blue eyes, auburn hair, and by occupation when enlisted a farmer.

Given at Camp Wright near Pine Bluff, Ark. This April 11th, 1863.

--Ruth Hasty

THE HOLLY-HARTON FAMILIES

Berry Grissom Taylor came to Texas from Fayette County, Alabama, about 1875 and settled in the Gum Springs community. He was getting on towards being an old man at that time and because of the hardships of a long journey he did not live long after reaching Texas. Several of his sons had preceded him in coming to Texas and the Indian Territory (Oklahoma). A son David was killed by a robber in 1874. Another son, Pinkney Taylor, had reached Texas by traveling with some scouts. In a battle with Indians he was shot through the body with an arrow. A scout in the crew drew a clean silk handkerchief through the wound to clean it. Pinkney Taylor recovered from the wound and lived for years. This Indian fight took place about two miles east of Kempner in Lampasas County on what is today called Taylor's mountain. From all accounts available that is how the mountain got its name. Other sons who came to Texas with their father were Charlie, John and Berry, Jr., often called Little Berry.

Berry Grissom Taylor's widowed daughter and her two small daughters were in this same wagon train. She was Nancy King Taylor Holly; her husband William Holly had died at the age of twenty-four while serving in the Confederate Army. Young Nancy Holly and her two small daughters settled in the Gum Springs community and with the help of near and dear relatives got along fairly well. Lucy Holly, her younger daughter, married Archie Key and soon thereafter they were on their way west. They finally settled in the Wichita Falls country where they raised a large family. Lucy Key lived to be ninety-five years old. Mary Jane Holly, the older daughter, on a few occasions dated a fine young fellow in the community--a dashing young blade by the name of John Barber. Their relationship came to a quick end when he turned outlaw with the Barber-Whitley gang. Nancy King Taylor Holly lived to be ninety-four. In the last three or four years of her life she drew a Confederate pension of \$25.00 per quarter.

Later, in 1877, another wagon train came from the east bringing people from Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee. In this train was a young fellow by the name of John Thomas (Coot) Harton, Jr. His father, John Thomas Harton, Sr., and Martha Collins were married in North Carolina in 1838. Soon thereafter they moved to Fayette County, Alabama, where three sons were born to them: Thomas, James and John T., Jr. The mother died soon after the birth of the youngest son, John T., Jr. The father soon married again and left the youngest son with his Grandmother Collins. She called him her little "Cooter"--a nickname by which he was known through life. When he was about eleven his grandmother died and he was left to shift pretty largely for himself. The Carpetbag government having wrecked his native Alabama, young Coot Harton hired out to drive in a wagon train to Texas. And in this train were families whose names later became familiar in the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs community: Daniels, Reeds, Preslars, Duncans--and more Taylors. On his arrival in this part of the country young Coot Harton was on his own. He worked at odd jobs and often related that his first day's work was with Buryl Preslar--gathering corn at Duncan Hill between Gum Springs and Florence.

THE HOLLY-HARTON FAMILIES

John Thomas (Coot) Harton, Jr., was married to Mary Jane Holly in Florence on February 3, 1879, and to them were born eleven children:

William Thomas Harton, who married Emogene Taylor--three daughters, Iva, Mamie and Opal. Iva Harton married Albert Cloud and had four children: Jean, who married Edwin Norman Edwards; Shirley, who married John Herbert Witcher and had three children, John David, Cathy Jean and Susan Elaine; two sons, Tommy and Joe. Mamie Harton married Amos Crouch and had one daughter Carolyn Kay. Opal Harton married H. W. Bizzell and had two boys and one girl, Don, Ray and Judy.

James Bedford Harton, who married Laura Berry--three sons, William, Leo and James B., Jr. Leo Harton married Buna Mae Lisle and had one daughter Helen who married R. C. Chambers and had two daughters, Rebecca and Sandra.

Minnie Bertha Harton--never married.

Lillian Beatrice Harton, who married Thomas H. McCormick--one son, Thomas Merton. Thomas Merton McCormick married Nelda Watson and had two daughters, Tommie Nell and Martha Ann. Tommie Nell married Donald Hicks and had two sons, Donald Brent and Gregory Kent. Martha Ann married Timothy Robert O'Keefe and had two daughters, Mary Elise and Susan Lorainne.

Essie Lona Harton, who married Robert Smith and died young.

Bertie Bell Harton, who married Cecil Humphries--two children, Mertice who married B. Pogue, and DeWayne who married Eleanor Hollingsworth.

Alice Mable Harton, who married C. S. McNeil.

Ira Lee Harton, who died in childhood.

Mary Lessie Harton--never married.

Dollie Ruth Harton, who married J. I. Caskey--one daughter Francille who married Wendell Field and had three children, Connie Melinda, Wendell Scott and Craig Bent.

Holly Edwin Harton, who married Charity Love--three children, Wanda Nell who died in infancy; Harold Windell who married Martha Yvonne Bell and had two children, Charlotte Jane and Harold Windell, Jr.; Shera Edwina who married Jesse Elvin Smith and had one son Ricky Elvin.

--H. E. Harton

* * *

THE HOLLY-HARTON FAMILIES

The Harton and Langford families lived directly across the street from one another for several years. I remember Mr. "Coot" Harton as a great outdoorsman and a lover of fine livestock, particularly horses. As evidence of the latter, in 1926 he purchased a fine horse in Stonewall County. Disdaining the conveniences of travel available to him, he rode the horse the full 275 miles to Briggs. The trip required six and a half days--and Mr. Harton was sixty-six at the time. He always said he made the trip on horseback "to maintain the dignity of the horse"--it was never meant that a horse should be pulled around the country in a trailer!

--E.L.

THE A. W. HORN FAMILY

My father, Abel Wesley Horn, and my mother, Elizabeth T. (Preslar) Horn, were both born and reared in Henderson County, Tennessee. They were married in 1877 and lived there for five years before coming to Texas. They first settled in Corsicana, later in Hoover's Valley near Killeen in Bell County. In 1889 they moved to Taylor's Gin--now Briggs. My father owned the first blacksmith shop in the community. It was built in 1890 next to the store and post office building owned by Mr. J. W. Edgar. Father and mother bought land from Mr. Steve Taylor on which they built their home and in which we children grew to maturity; and in which they lived until their deaths--father in 1933, mother in 1942.

Father and mother were the parents of six children: Minnie L. (April 5, 1881--December 19, 1913), William Albert (March 23, 1883--February 7, 1888), Jack (November 12, 1884--January 4, 1944), Mary (January 8, 1889--), Elizabeth (July 21, 1890--December 19, 1910), James Harry (June 5, 1892--). Jack married Fannie Yancy in 1906; Mary married Albert B. Moore; James Harry married Vera Woodbury, and at the time of her death in 1960 they had been married 50 years. Descendants of father and mother include ten grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren, four great-great-grandchildren.

My sister Minnie and my brother Jack both attended the old Gum Springs school. Later they and the rest of us children went to school in Taylor's Gin and Briggs. Minnie also attended the teachers college in San Marcos and the Baylor Female College in Belton. She taught in the Mill Creek school, in the Adams school, at Red Bud and Briggs; and also did private tutoring in the H. J. McGuire home. Elizabeth attended Baylor Female College in Belton from 1906 to 1910. Shortly after graduation she returned to Belton as bookkeeper in the college; she died in December 1910.

THE A. W. HORN FAMILY

Mr. J. W. Edgar's and my father's were the first business establishments to locate in what is today the business area of Briggs. They moved their store and shop from their original site about 1897 or 1898. Several years later Mr. R. A. (Bob) Patterson worked for my father for awhile. The shop was later sold to him when my father took up carpentry and building.

--Mrs. A. B. Moore
(nee Mary B. Horn)

THE JOHN H. JOYCE FAMILY

John Henry Joyce was born in Fayetteville, Arkansas, on January 13, 1858. He came to Texas with his family when he was a small child and grew to young manhood in Temple. He was married to Miss Cornelia Ann Tucker, daughter of Rev. L. G. and Hannah Tucker, on December 17, 1882. Cornelia Ann Tucker was born at Andice on September 3, 1862. Her father had homesteaded a section of land between Andice and Liberty Hill where he built his home and in which Mr. Joyce and Miss Tucker were married. They made their home in Liberty Hill a short time, then moved to Florence, and from there to Briggs in 1901 where they lived many years. Mr. Joyce was a blacksmith by profession. He died June 28, 1928; Mrs. Joyce, January 31, 1930. They were the parents of eight children.

Leslie Roswell (Jack) Joyce was born at Liberty Hill on September 20, 1883. He became a proficient machinist and blacksmith, a professional horse-shoer, and later a pharmacist. His father bought the A. W. Horn blacksmith shop in 1902. Jack bought the R. A. Patterson blacksmith shop in 1906, the Dr. J. F. Taylor drugstore in 1908. Later he and his father traded shops. He then remodeled the shop on the west side of the street and moved the drugstore there in 1912. He sold the drugstore in 1918 to Dr. Cheatam, who in turn sold it to Mr. H. J. McGuire in 1920. Mr. McGuire sold the store to Pomeroy and Hastings Smith in 1923. The store burned some five years later when a fire all but wiped out a good portion of the business section of Briggs. L. R. Joyce was married to Miss Virginia Elizabeth Eddy on March 16, 1903. They were the parents of a daughter, Carrie Christine. He lives in Graham, Texas.

Kate Joyce was born August 31, 1885; died June 29, 1901.

Ollie Jane Joyce was born August 9, 1887; died October 16, 1908.

Mary Joyce was born at Florence on November 20, 1889; married Wm. E. Black of Oakalla on December 23, 1917. They were the parents of a son Lane R. Black, a daughter Hazel Joyce Black. Lives in Lampasas.

THE JOHN H. JOYCE FAMILY

Louis Joyce was born at Florence on March 30, 1892; married Miss Dovie May Jordan of Briggs on January 11, 1913. They were the parents of four sons: Louis Clinton, Jack Leslie, Harold Wade, James Valton. He is a machinist by profession. Lives in Graham, Texas.

Hannah Orlue Joyce was born at Florence on March 25, 1894; died September 30, 1933.

China Velma Joyce was born at Florence on August 29, 1896; married Houston Edgar in June of 1923. They were the parents of a daughter Virginia, a son Bill. Lives in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Berry Milton (Pete) Joyce was born at Andice on August 13, 1899; married Miss Mattie Russell at Brady on July 18, 1921. They were the parents of a daughter Grace, three sons, Milton, Darrel, John Howard. Berry Milton Joyce engaged in farming and ranching. Lives in Brady, Texas.

* * *

Two amusing anecdotes have long been told and retold in the Joyce family. Both concern Leslie Roswell(Jack)--the first about how he got the nickname Jack, the second about the loss of his marriage license.

From the time Leslie Roswell learned to walk it was almost an impossible task for mother to keep up with him. Finally, in exasperation she put a cowbell around his neck so she could keep track of his whereabouts. One day Mr. Gardner, the editor of the Liberty Hill paper, heard a noise and distress call at the rear of his shop. Upon going out to see what the trouble was, he found Leslie and his bell entangled in a barbed wire fence. In untangling Leslie, Mr. Gardner called him a little so-and-so jackass--a name which was shortened to "Jack" and by which Leslie Roswell has been known for seventy-odd years.

The second anecdote has to do with Jack and Virginia's wedding. Once all the preparations were ready, they decided to drive to Uncle John Tucker's home near Liberty Hill where they would spend the night before going on to the minister's home next day. But come the morning consternation reigned when they discovered that Jack had lost the marriage license. Virginia was soon in tears--and needless to say Jack himself was somewhat perturbed. Uncle John, a great prankster, had purloined the license during the night and after what seemed an interminable length of time at last succeeded in finding it! Whereupon Jack and Virginia climbed into a brand new Spalding buggy borrowed especially for the occasion and clucking to a beautiful black horse were soon on their way to the minister's home. There they sat in the buggy for the ceremony. Another couple sat in a second buggy nearby and along with seven cousins on horseback were witnesses to the wedding.

--Mrs. Wm. E. Black
(nee Mary Joyce)

THE JOHN (JACK) JUBY FAMILY

Mr. John (Jack) Juby was born in Norfolk, England, December 1, 1850. He came to Canada at the age of 20, remained there six months, then came to the United States, landing in Michigan. After working in Michigan for some time, he migrated to Salem, Oregon, where he took out naturalization papers in the year 1877.

When Mr. Juby decided to come south he hardly knew where to go. He chose a very unique way in deciding. With a map spread before him, he closed his eyes and selected a place at random. That place was Burnet County, Texas, and to Burnet County he came in 1881. He bought what was known as the Jack Smith ranch, purchasing it from Norton Moses, father of the Honorable Dayton Moses. Later he bought land adjoining this place, and there he made his home the remainder of his life.

Finding the life of a batchelor dull and lonesome in this new country, Mr. Juby sent for his fiancée, Miss Fanny Zumpkeller, of Salem, Oregon, to come to Texas to become his wife. She came by train to Austin, Texas, where he met her, bringing her to the town of Burnet, where they were married in Mrs. Beatty's Hotel on July 16, 1885.

Mrs. Juby was born December 25, 1859, in Germany and came to this country in 1870 with her parents, settling in Oregon.

To this union four children were born: John Juby, October 10, 1886; Delia Juby, November 16, 1887; Fred Juby, November 30, 1888, and Jim Juby, June 1, 1891.

John Juby and Miss Maude Stock were married October 20, 1912. They had two girls: Fanny Ruth Juby, born March 22, 1914, and Leila Helen Hine Juby, born July 18, 1917.

Delia Juby and Celie Hodges were married December 3, 1906. Their children are: Vada Hodges, born October 28, 1911, and Elza Hodges, born February 10, 1914. Celie Hodges died August 9, 1949.

Fred Juby and Elnora Wykes were married October 18, 1914. Their children are: Margaret, born July 15, 1916, Frederick, born December 19, 1919, Evelyn, born April 12, 1923, and Mildred, born January 26, 1925.

James (Jim) Juby and Miss Daisy Hughes were married November 2, 1919. Their children are: Annie Lois Juby, born January 3, 1921, and Neyron Juby, born January 24, 1923.

Mr. Jack Juby died April 19, 1938, Mrs. Juby January 31, 1939. They are buried in the Prairie View Cemetery two miles south of Briggs, Texas.

Descendants of John and Maude Juby:

Ruth Juby and Hubert M. Carnes were married June 4, 1932. Their children are: Helen Delores, born November 20, 1934, and Hubert M. (Tony) Carnes, born September 11, 1948.

THE JOHN (JACK) JUBY FAMILY

Helen Delores Carnes and Lynwood Grant were married June 3, 1955. Their children are: Gregory Allan, born November 24, 1957, and Mark Stephen, born September 29, 1959.

Helen Juby and James Byars were married July 22, 1950. Their children are: John Byars, born December 14, 1951, and George Byars, born August 30, 1954.

Descendants of Delia Juby and Celie Hodges:

Vada Hodges and Oscar Taylor were married August 20, 1952. Elza Hodges and Fannie Schooley were married January 17, 1935. Their children are: Jackie Hodges, born August 20, 1938, and Donna Hodges, born March 29, 1945.

Descendants of Fred and Elnora Wykes Juby:

Margaret Juby married Frank Shramek September 27, 1937. Their children are: Anne Shramek, born November 30, 1938, Johnny Shramek, born April 1, 1940, died February 27, 1949; Rosemary Shramek, born November 29, 1950, and Cynthia Shramek, born July 4, 1953.

Frederick Juby and Dolly B. Smith were married June 15, 1941. Frederick Eugene born November 7, 1942, married Sue Ellen Steinsburger August 13, 1960.

Evelyn Juby and T. P. Roberts were married June 8, 1946. Josie Fern Roberts born March 27, 1948.

Mildred Juby and J. W. Williams were married August 19, 1942. David Warren Williams, born February 11, 1945, and Carolyn Kay Williams, born October 4, 1948.

Descendants of James (Jim) Juby and Daisy Juby:

Lois Juby and Roy Bryan Skaggs were married October 31, 1942.

Neyron Juby and Mary Chambers were married July 17, 1945. Their children are: Judy Anne Juby, born February 18, 1947, and Sherri Gail Juby, born May 1, 1954.

--Mrs. Fred Juby

THE M. L. LANGFORD FAMILY

Marcus (Mark) Lafayette Langford (May 15, 1870--May 19, 1939) was born near Georgetown May 15, 1870. His mother, nee Christina Catherina Johnson, came to the U. S. from Sweden in 1852, to Texas in 1856; married (1) Andrew Munson and had six children when she was widowed. Married (2) William A. Langford August 29, 1869, and had five more children of whom Mark was the eldest.

M. L. Langford came to the community of Gum Springs in the late 1880s. It was here that he met and married Maud Clarence Fewell (February 17, 1873--August 14, 1939) on August 24, 1890. Seven children were born to them while the family lived at Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs: Ernest (May 30, 1891), married Lela Davidson December 24, 1913; Alda Marie (March 7, 1893--August 18, 1954), married Joseph F. Seale December 25, 1920; Ivan (November 29, 1894), married Alice Childress Smith December 25, 1921; Clyde (August 5, 1896--July 14, 1950), married Leah Gandy December 29, 1923; Oran (December 8, 1898--June 17, 1924); Elton (May 21, 1900), married Gertrude Lavelle October 5, 1927; William Harper (September 6, 1904), married Mary Regina Degan December 26, 1935. Two other children were born in Bertram: Christina (February 13, 1907--December 1, 1914); Mark L. Jr. (May 11, 1910, married Margaret Ray November 15, 1940.

M. L. Langford worked at various jobs in his early years--as a cow hand, "stand man" at the West gin, carpenter, and at the time of his death was in the general contracting business. Among his first buildings were the addition to the Briggs school in 1904, the Bertram high school building in 1909, the Florence high school building in 1911.

Ernest Langford graduated from Bertram High School 1909; B. S. Texas A&M College 1913; M. S. University of Illinois 1924. Forty-one years college and university teaching: six at University of Illinois, thirty-five as professor and head of the division of architecture Texas A&M College. Retired September 1, 1957; part-time archivist Texas A&M College; compiler of these notes and First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the South and Southwest, Directory of American Scholars, Texian Who's Who, Directory of American Architects. Mayor, College Station, Texas, 1942 to date. One son, one grandson.

Alda M. Langford graduated from Bertram High School 1910; B. A. Southwestern University after attending summer sessions only; highest honors ever received by a person graduating during the summer session. Taught in the public schools at Luling, Bertram, Georgetown and Lampasas for 33 years. One daughter, three grandchildren. Lived in Lampasas, Texas, at time of death.

Ivan Langford graduated from Bertram High School 1913; B. S. Texas A&M College 1917. Engaged in business in Bryan, Texas, 1923-1933; cashier First National Bank of Bryan 1933-1947; president Bryan Building and Loan Association 1947 to date. Captain, U. S. Marine Corps, World War I. One daughter, one son, eight grandchildren. Lives in Bryan, Texas.

THE M. L. LANGFORD FAMILY

Clyde Langford attended Bertram High School. Engaged in business and ranching all of his life. Veteran World War I. One daughter, two grandchildren. Lived in Corpus Christi, Texas, at time of death.

Oran Langford gassed in World War I in its closing days. Never fully recovered; died in his twenty-sixth year. Lived in Georgetown, Texas. Never married.

Elton Langford left high school in 1918 to enlist in U. S. Navy. Played professional baseball 1921-1933. General manager Underwood Compress Company plants in Texas Panhandle. One daughter, one grandson. Lives in Plainview, Texas.

William Harper Langford graduated from Georgetown High School 1923; attended Southwestern University and Texas A&M College. Engaged in cotton farming, ginning, cattle business; manager ginning interests; all in California since 1930. Two daughters, one grandson. Lives in Bakersfield, California.

Christina Langford died of diphtheria in her eight year, in Georgetown, Texas.

Mark L. Langford, Jr. was educated in Georgetown public schools; Southwestern University, B. S. and M. S. degrees in 1931, 1938. In public school work thirty years, mostly in Corpus Christi. One daughter. Lives in Corpus Christi, Texas.

THE R. S. LEE FAMILY

Ruel Simeon Lee, one of the eight children of William Henry Simeon Lee and Emma (Orchard) Lee, was born in Lampasas County on March 2, 1872. He came to near Briggs in 1894 and bought land on Mill Creek where he lived for many years before moving into Briggs in 1928. He and his wife, Minnie Perry Lee, lived here until three years ago when they went to Temple to be cared for in a nursing home.

R. S. Lee's grandfather Orchard was a Baptist minister in London; his mother came to the United States from England when she was five years of age. His father was born in Fayette County, Texas, but came to Lampasas County in 1880. He was an invalid practically all of his life.

Ruel Simeon Lee and Miss Minnie Perry were married in Burnet County in 1896. Her father, Henry Perry, was a Confederate soldier and later served in the Texas Ranger Service for several years. Her mother was Alzady (James) Perry.

THE R. S. LEE FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Lee are the parents of five children--Mae, married J. Ernest Champlin, and resides in Briggs. The Champlins have three children--Lawrence, married Rachel Wiley, seven children; Edith, married Eddie Brizendine, three children; LaGene, married John Ray Hunt, two daughters; Henry Lee, three sons and resides in Alice; Leta Lee Taylor, two daughters, and resides in Temple; Raybon Lee, married Bonnie Britton, one son Robert of Killeen; Irene, married Walter Sheffield, three children, including twins.

The two older children of Lawrence and Rachel Wiley Champlin, Vernon Eugene and Allen Ray, had twelve grandparents for a number of years--certainly a record hard to match anywhere. On the paternal side were Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Champlin, Mr. Lawrence Champlin, Sr., and Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Lee; on the maternal side, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Wiley, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Wiley, Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Wiley, and Mr. Ben Fewell.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE J. H. LEWIS FAMILY

John Henry Lewis was born in Houston on February 6, 1869. His father, William Lewis, and his mother, Drusilla Hobson, were both from North Caroline, although both had lived in Alabama years before their coming to Texas. Both of his grandfathers were in Alabama regiments during the Civil War. He was married to Miss Mary Wilmonette Wimberly of Florence on July 23, 1891. (Both the parents of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis had come to Texas about 1866 or 1867.) Following their marriage the young couple spent their honeymoon in Austin, the trip being made by train from Georgetown, her first train ride. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis were the parents of three children: Hubert Rennon, Selma Drusilla and Henry Hazlewood Lewis. Mr. Lewis died of influenza in 1918. Mrs. Lewis was born July 11, 1872; now widowed and in her 90th year, she has long been a resident of Winters, Texas.

Hubert Rennon Lewis was born in Florence on May 24, 1892 and died of a heart involvement in August 1936. He married Miss Maude McPeeters of Coke County in 1915 and was the father of one daughter, Floygene Drusilla, who married James Maxwell and had two sons. Mrs. Maxwell now lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Mrs. Lewis in Winters. Hubert Lewis started to school in Briggs in the fall of 1898.*

Selma Drusilla Lewis was born at Florence on October 29, 1894. She was married to John Bishop of Petrolia and Wichita Falls in 1920. She has one daughter, Eleanor Bishop Ragsdale, wife of M. M. Ragsdale of Purcellville, Virginia,

THE J. H. LEWIS FAMILY

and mother of four children. She started to school in Briggs in 1902; was an honor graduate from the Ballinger High School in 1911, received her B. A. and M. A. Degrees from the University of Texas in 1917 and 1933, and her Ph. D. from Colorado in 1956. She taught in the public schools of Texas for over thirty years; since 1957 professor of English, McMurry College, Abilene, Texas.**

Henry Hazlewood Lewis was born at Briggs on August 24, 1897. He attended Texas A&M College in 1917-18, leaving at the time of his father's death. He was married to Miss Sue Simpson of Austin in October 1938. Over a period of some fifteen years he was a field superintendent for a large oil corporation on the Pacific coast, working out of Los Angeles. He was in the insurance business at the time of his death, which occurred in 1954 following injuries received in an automobile accident near Abilene. Mrs. Lewis died December 21, 1960.

John Henry Lewis was one of the early businessmen in Briggs. He owned the first grocery store and confectionery and certainly the first barber-shop-- a mere one-chair operation which he established in the rear of his store for Saturday shaves and haircuts. He freighted his goods by wagon and team from Lampasas; was interested in the development of the community, and along with others persuaded Dr. W. R. Hazlewood to come to Briggs for the practice of medicine. Another man whom he interested in coming to Briggs was a druggist from the state of New York, a man by the name of George Briggs and an uncle to the wife of Dr. Hazlewood. It was this family name that was chosen for the town when the name of Taylor's Gin was changed to Briggs in 1898.

Sometime soon after 1900 Mr. Lewis bought a ranch near Briggs--a ranch now owned by Fred Juby--where the family lived for about five years. The family later moved to Runnels County where Mr. Lewis farmed and ranched until his death. Both Mr. and Mrs. Lewis were of the Primitive Baptist faith.

--Mrs. Selma L. Bishop
(nee Selma Drusilla Lewis)

* This anecdote more properly belongs elsewhere, but since it goes back to Hubert Lewis's first day in school there can be no particular reason for not reciting it here. The Lewises and Langfords lived all of two blocks from each other in 1898, so it was decided by our parents that Hubert and I should start to school together. The day came at long last and we were decked out in our very best. For some reason or other, Hubert was to come by our house, which was two blocks out of his way, and we would go along together. Well, he came-- but as we lifted the latch on the yard gate my courage failed me. I simply was in no mood to start to school that day. I remember that I whimpered a bit and stood on one foot and the other so long that Hubert had to go on alone. But he came by in the afternoon to report that going to school wasn't bad at all--he didn't have to do a thing all day but sit still! With that assurance I agreed to go with him next day--which I did when he came by next morning.
E. L.

THE J. H. LEWIS FAMILY

** In preparing this sketch of the John Henry Lewis family, Mrs. Bishop was disposed to be reserved in mentioning all of the honors and accomplishments which have been hers in a long life devoted to education. In addition to receiving the B. A., M. A. and Ph. D. degrees which she mentions--which is a significant accomplishment within itself--other honors have been hers too. They belong in this record. With her permission the following are mentioned. E. L.

Author of many poems published in anthologies and magazines.

Author of a book to be published this fall (1961) by the Faith Press, Ltd., London. Title: Isaac Watts: Hymns and Spiritual Songs, 1705-1748--A study in language changes during the first half of the 18th century.

Author of a bibliography "The Poetical Principles of Isaac Watts," her Ph. D. dissertation; to be published by American Bibliographical Society Papers.

Listed in Directory of American Scholars and Who's Who in American Education.

Winner of the "Piper Professor Award of 1961," an award carrying a \$1,000 cash award and given to ten college professors yearly for outstanding work in research and education.

THE DR. JOHN McCARTY FAMILY

My paternal grandfather, Dr. John McCarty, was born in 1830 in Owensboro, Kentucky. He studied medicine in the Louisville College of Medicine and came to Texas right after the Civil War. He met my step-grandmother, Elizabeth Rumsey, at a state medical convention in Galveston. She was a daughter of Dr. George Rumsey, who was both a practicing physician and a Methodist clergyman and who lived in Corn Hill in Williamson County. After living in McKinney for several years they moved to Corn Hill in 1876 where he formed a partnership with two nephews, another Dr. John McCarty and a Dr. Weatherford. He later moved back to McKinney where he lived until about 1892.

In moving back to the Gum Springs community my grandfather shipped a carload of young harness horses, mares and colts and young mules, from Collin County to Lampasas via the Santa Fe. He then trailed them overland to a farm just south of Briggs--a farm which is owned today by Charlie Hasty. He later traded for a farm closer to Briggs--from Mr. Mark Patterson--where he built a barn, drilled a well and remodeled the house. He later traded again (1911) with Mr. Patterson for a residence in Briggs.

THE DR. JOHN McCARTY FAMILY

My grandfather was active as a physician in the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs community from 1892 to 1909. About 1900--possibly a year or two earlier--he persuaded a young doctor, Dr. W. R. Hazlewood, to come to Briggs. After that he made fewer and fewer calls until his eyesight forced him to retire. But as one would expect, many of his patients still sought his advice, even until the year of his death.

My grandfather was a country doctor in every sense of the word. Going by horse and buggy--or on horseback when the roads and lanes were impassable--he traveled the length and breadth of the community in his practice. He died in 1916 and is buried in the Prairie View cemetery. My step-grandmother died in 1926.

My grandfather had a son Eugene Lee McCarty (1852--1907) by his first marriage. Eugene Lee McCarty married* Beulah Roane (1866-1942) and had two children: John Lee McCarty, who married Ethel Lindsey of Florence; Mary Elizabeht McCarty, who married Melvin Ross and had three children. Of the children of Melvin and Mary Elizabeth Ross, Melvin Lee Ross married Joyce Dagget and had four children: Bobby Lee, Allen Eugene, Lynda Joyce and Jo Ann; Eugene Ross married Betty Stanke; Carolyn Ross married Jerry Nichols.

--John Lee McCarty

* See section "The Briggs Enterprise" for a "local" item announcing the marriage of Mr. McCarty and Miss Roane.

THE H. J. McGUIRE FAMILY

My paternal grandparents, John and Emma Eubank McGuire came to Texas in a wagon train from Kentucky. Although they had traveled together in the same train they did not meet until after their arrival. They were married at Circleville in Williamson County on April 29, 1858. They continued to live near Circleville where my grandfather bought land and operated a cotton gin. He also engaged in farming and the raising of livestock. They were the parents of the following children: Henry Justus, November 17, 1863--July 11, 1945, married Karie Alice Reavis; Ruth, married Eli Knight, Mary, married Ed Tiley; Rose, married Alva Sitton; John, married Mary Edna Reavis, sister of Karie Alice; Fulton, married Alice Williams; Joe, married Pearl Dixon; Dan, married Doppie Cooper.

THE H. J. McGUIRE FAMILY

For years John and Edna McGuire lived near the old Reavis home on what is called the Knob place--from a "knob" which still forms a familiar landmark in that part of the county. They moved to Runnels County in 1900; later to New Mexico where he lives with his daughter Mrs. Nita Leeman. John and Edna McGuire were the parents of four children: Dan, Hugh, Nita, Thomas.

My father, Henry Justus McGuire, came to Burnet County in 1882 and engaged in ranching about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the site of Gum Springs. Ranching in those days was no easy task; in common with the early settlers of the community, he experienced the usual hardships of the pioneer. The absence of fences permitted stock to drift; sheep had to be herded during the day--no matter the weather--and penned at night--and as likely as not in an enclosure made of brush cuttings. Saddle horses were hobbled or staked at night; the wolf was an enemy of the sheep man for years; groceries were carried by horseback from Taylor's Gin. The rancher's menu consisted mostly of bread, bacon, brown beans, potatoes and molasses--and once in a while a sheep was butchered. My father gradually got his land fenced, and by the time he sold out in 1943 had increased his holdings to some 3,000 acres.

During the first years when my father visited his parents in Circleville he went on horseback, always passing Gum Springs going and returning. These trips also took him by the Reavis house where he always saw his future bride, a young curly-headed girl named Karie Alice Reavis. He early determined to wait for her--which he did, until they were married in the Prairie View Methodist Church on November 9, 1892, the first couple to be married in that church. In passing we may mention that when my father first began courting my mother he went by horseback--but he finished his courting days with a buggy and a double team of horses!

My mother had an unusual experience on the eve of a bride-to-be. An aunt who was teaching in a school in San Marcos had all of the clothes for the wedding shipped in a wooden box to Florence by way of Georgetown from where mail was brought to Florence by horse and buggy. Mother's brother Will went to Florence the afternoon of the wedding day to get the box. But it was too large to bring in the buggy and so had been left in Georgetown! But great as the disappointment was, there was a way out of the predicament. My mother simply wore the dress of one of the bridesmaids! The bridesmaid wore mother's sister Edna's dress--and poor sister Edna was left without a new dress. Following the wedding a supper was served the wedding party at the Reavis home. From there my parents went to their ranch home where they lived for more than fifty years.

In due time I arrived, and being the only living child I more or less filled the place of boy and girl. Having learned to ride a horse when I was quite young, I helped with the cattle and sheep, even in the day of dipping cattle to stamp out the fever tick. And after my father purchased a car I did all of the chauffeuring for him.

THE H. J. McGUIRE FAMILY

In November of 1933 I met the man who would one day be my husband--James Albert Kinser. He had come to Briggs as the pastor of the church in which my parents had been married--the church was moved from its Prairie View site to Briggs in 1906. He left Briggs in fall of 1934 to accept the pastorate of the church in the hill country at Harper, Texas. He remained there until 1936 when he gave up the ministry to accept an office position on the construction of the Buchanan dam on the Colorado above Burnet. We were married May 22, 1937, and were soon engaged in ranching with my parents. When the ranch was sold in 1943 we bought a place about halfway between Briggs and Florence in Burnet County and continued our ranching interests. My parents resided in Florence until my father passed away on July 11, 1945. Mother then made her home with us until her death on January 1, 1956. In the fall of 1958 we sold our ranch and bought another three miles south of Florence on the Florence-Georgetown highway in Williamson County.

And so after my spending sixty-five years in Burnet County I now find myself in my father's native county!

Father was a public-spirited citizen. His interests extended far beyond those of ranching and livestock. He helped organize the Briggs State Bank and served as its first vice-president. He was also interested in and served as an officer in other banks in Bertram, Kempner and Florence. He supported all worthy causes with both his time and his talents--but above all he was a family man.

--Mrs. Rose McGuire Kinser

THE W. B. MOORE FAMILY

William Benton Moore was born in Jackson, Mississippi, October 13, 1849; his wife, Sophia Ann Truelove, was also born in Jackson on May 20, 1849. They were married in 1869, came to Texas in 1875 and settled near Florence in Williamson County. They moved to Briggs in 1900, established first the Moore Hotel, later engaged in farming and ranching. They both died the same day, November 26, 1919.

Mr. and Mrs. Moore were the parents of seven children: Susie, who married M. O. Daley and was the mother of six children; Andrew, who married Mattie Hall and was the father of three children; William Franklin, who married Mattie McNeece and was the father of three children; Albert B., who married May Horn and was the father of eight children; Fannie, who married first V. O. Potts, later Don Godfrey of Lometa--she and Mr. Potts were the parents of five children; John Edwin, who married Beatrice Ratliff on November 6, 1910; Ardella, who married Will Green of Florence, the mother of three children.

THE W. B. MOORE FAMILY

John Edwin Moore lived in Briggs more than fifty years. His wife, Beatrice Ratliff, was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Ratliff who came to Briggs in 1906 when the Ratliff-Lindsey Company was organized. Later he and his father-in-law organized the Ratliff-Moore Company, and in his later years he was in business by himself. He served for many years as a school trustee, also many years as an election judge, and in all ways took an active interest in community enterprises, especially sports--an interest which stemmed from his love for baseball when he was a member of one of the better teams which Briggs fielded in the early 1900s. He died March 17, 1952.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

Note: Since in the compiling of these bits of history from Gum Springs to 1960 we are not following any of the orthodox rules for writing history, I would like to add this anecdote about Mr. W. B. Moore--we kids called him "Uncle Ben" and Mrs. Moore "Aunt Sophie". For some reason which I have long since forgotten--it was probably because of the "goodies" which Aunt Sophie baked--I found myself at their "hotel" one day shortly before noon--probably about 11:55 a. m. She had sent me to the woodpile to get an armful of wood for her kitchen stove. I was in the act of stepping up on the back porch with my arms full of stovewood when I heard this bit of conversation between Uncle Ben and a "drummer" who was at the moment on his way into the dining room.

"There's the washbowl right there," said Uncle Ben, pointing to bowl and pitcher on a shelf which ran between two posts on the porch. "Wash up and come on in to dinner."

"My time's too damned valuable to wash," replied the drummer; "I've got to eat and be on my way."

"Your time may be too damned valuable to wash and you may have to eat and be on your way--but you will not eat at my table until you wash."

I may add that the drummer washed!

--E.L.

THE W. A. NICHOLS FAMILY

William Alfred Nichols was born in Tennessee November 10, 1858; he died in Briggs August 10, 1938, in the eightieth year of his life. He was married to Sarah Ann Taylor October 20, 1878, and to them were born six children: Ida, who married Merritt Caskey; Lee, married Lessie Jordan; Essie, married Ernest Davis; Mollie, married Earl Gude; Will, married (1) Belle Reed, (2) May McCall; and one child who died in infancy.

Mrs. Nichols, daughter of Stephen and Nancy Adeline Ross Taylor, was born in Henderson County, Tennessee, November 13, 1861; died at her home in Briggs in 1953. Mr. and Mrs. Nichols were married in Lexington, Tennessee. They came to the community of Gum Springs in 1882 and spent the rest of their lives here. Mr. Nichol's principal interests were ranching and farming. Mrs. Nichols often related that her grandfather Ross was a Yankee and served in the Northern Army while her grandfather Taylor was a Southerner who served in the Confederate Army, and that when they visited their children on furlough the one sent a scout ahead to see whether or not the other was at home. They were very cautious in what they said and did; and fearing each other, the one never said or did anything that the other could repeat.

* * *

Note: The three paragraphs above are condensed from notes taken in an interview by Mrs. L. S. SKaggs with Mrs. W. A. Nichols several years before the latter's death in 1953. The following paragraphs are taken from a letter written in February 1961 by Mrs. Nichols's daughter, Mrs. Ernest Davis (nee Essie Nichols), of Big Spring, Texas. A bit of repetition will be noted--but that only adds interest to our story.

* * *

My father and mother came to Texas from Tennessee in 1882 and lived first on a farm between Gum Springs and Florence, then called Brooksville. They later moved to Taylor County and settled on Valley Creek. A severe drought made it necessary for my father to sell his cattle--which he did and moved his family back to Taylor's store on some land owned by my grandfather, Mr. Steve Taylor. He later bought the place and there we children grew to young adulthood.

My grandfather Taylor owned the land where Briggs now stands. He and my father caused the town to be surveyed--and thus the town was laid out in blocks and lots and the streets named. The late Mr. Walter Rountree was the surveyor. Lots were sold to people who settled in Briggs--and lots were donated to the Baptist church and the school. Later John and Lloyd Ellason bought acreage for a gin and my father and Charlie West hauled the boiler from Austin by wagon.

My father was the first mail carrier between Florence and Briggs--or Gum Springs. At that time there was no post office in the community. He made the roundtrip--a distance of some twenty miles or more--by horseback twice a week for seventy-five cents a trip.

THE W. A. NICHOLS FAMILY

My parents moved to the house known as the Nichols place in 1897. My mother lived there the rest of her life. (The contract stated that my mother should retain and live in the house the rest of her life--which she did.) The three of us older children--Ida, Lee and myself--all went to school first at Gum Springs. As I remember it, teachers at that time were Mr. R. E. Ward and Mr. Henry Campbell. When the school was moved all of us children went to school in the new location--Taylor's Gin and Briggs.

THE G. W. PATTERSON FAMILY

George Washington Patterson and his wife Sarah Carroll Patterson were born in Tennessee and came to Texas about 1898. Soon after their arrival in the community of Briggs, Mrs. Patterson was left a widow with six daughters. By sheer dint of hard work and perseverance she maintained their farm home until five of the daughters were married, and until her death in 1925. The six daughters were: Minnie, deceased; Emogene, married W. T. Harton; Ella, married J. A. Taylor; Esta Lee, married Thomas Kendrick; Betty Cleveland, married J. Merdia Priest; Lessie, married first Claude McDaniel, later R. W. (Bob) Jones.

Children of William T. and Emogene Patterson Harton: Iva, married Albert Cloud (deceased); Mamie (deceased), married Amos Crouch; Opal, married H. W. Bizzell. Grandchildren: Jean, Joe, Shirley and Thomas Cloud; Carolyn Crouch; Don, Ray and Judy Bizzell.

Children of James Andrew and Ella Patterson Taylor: Jackie, married John Parker--two children; Elouise; Georgia, married Miles Shelby; James Andrew, Jr., married Hazel Boales--two sons, James Max and John Anthony; Edna Earl, married Walter Pannetta--two daughters--registered nurse, overseas duty in World War II. James Max Taylor married Claudette Bell--one son. (See elsewhere for five generations in this family.)

Children of Thomas and Esta Lee Kendrick: Lucille, married Eddie White; Sam, married Joyce Harris--one daughter, two grandchildren. Thomas Kendrick was the son of Sam and Cecilia Jackson Dooley Kendrick, who had a daughter Epsie Dooley by her first marriage. Thomas and Esta Lee Kendrick moved to Montana shortly after their marriage where they owned extensive ranching interests.

Children of Merdia and Betty Priest: one son Hoyle presently residing in California.

Children of R. W. (Bob) and Lessie Jones: Leighton and Maxine; one son Clinton McDaniel by first marriage. All presently residing in Bakersfield, California.

THE G. W. PATTERSON FAMILY

A nephew, John L. Patterson, made his home for many, many years with Mrs. G. W. Patterson. He had come to Texas with his parents Riddle and Sally Patterson, along with other Patterson families. Following the deaths of his parents he made his home with his aunt. In later years he lived in Lampasas, and later still in Lawn, Texas. He is buried in the Mt. Moriah cemetery. John Patterson was a great entertainer--especially at parties, meetings of the local literary society--wherever a crowd happened to come together. Edwin Harton refers to him affectionately in his story of the Briggs Hayloft Jamboree Gang.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs
Mrs. Hazel Taylor

THE MARCUS (MARK) PATTERSON FAMILY

Marcus (Mark) Patterson was born in Henderson County, Tennessee, October 24, 1850. He was the son of Gilbert and Millie Emaline Patterson, who were married October 15, 1847. He married Rose Ann Maness; they came to the community of Gum Springs in 1882 and were the parents of six children, all deceased except one son M. A. Patterson of Lawn, Texas: C. G. Patterson, married Josie King; Aggie Patterson, married W. R. Zimmerlee; Millie Patterson, married B. T. Preslar; M. A. Patterson, married Lillie Davis and following her death married her sister Sallie Davis Caskey; Mary Patterson, married W. E. Clinkscales; J. Lee Patterson, married Lillie Berry.

Of the Patterson children, Mary and Lee were the only two to spend all of their lives in Briggs.

James Lee Patterson was born June 30, 1884, and on January 8, 1905, married Lillie Berry, daughter of William and Fannie Davis Berry of the Naruna community in Burnet County. They were the parents of two children: Oma Lee, who married Thaddeus R. Carson, and Marcus Earl (deceased), who married Molly Lenora Caskey. Children of Thaddeus R. and Oma Lee Carson are T. R., Jr. and Glynda Carson, now Mrs. D. L. Carpenter. Marcus Earl and Lenora Caskey Patterson had one son, Jack Patterson. There are five great-grandsons in the family: Bobby and Marcus Carson, Pat and Mike Carpenter, and Marcus LaVaughan Patterson.

Oma Lee Patterson (Mrs. T. R. Carson, 3r.) is an accomplished musician and a teacher of music in the Lampasas public schools. She has recently received her master's degree which she began work on in 1950. In the meantime she has taught every year, taken correspondence courses, attended night classes and summer schools. And as one would expect, her daughter Glynda is an accomplished pianist.

THE MARCUS (MARK) PATTERSON FAMILY

Marcus Earl Patterson was an operator of heavy road machinery and was for many years employed in road construction. He was also a skilled welder. His son Jack was also an operator of road machinery but is now managing a ranch four miles east of Briggs. He lives in Briggs and is married to the former Nora Faye Daniels; they have one son, the greatgrandson Marcus LaVaughan Patterson referred to above.

James Lee Patterson was a livestock farmer and truck line operator. He was a prominent citizen of Briggs and always took an active part in community affairs. He died November 11, 1957; his widow now resides on the farm and ranch which has been in the family name continuously for seventy-odd years.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

* * *

The following notes are by M. A. Patterson of Lawn, Texas, only surviving child of Marcus and Rose Ann Patterson.

Mark and Rose Ann Patterson moved from Henderson County in Tennessee in the year 1882. They settled in Burnet County on the Atkinson farm three miles west of what is today the town of Briggs. There were six of us children, three girls and three boys: Aggie, Charley, Millie, Amos, Mary and Lee. Lee was the only Texan in the bunch; he was born here in 1884.

After two years on the Atkinson farm my father bought a farm from John Taylor just west of what is today Briggs. Later he traded the farm to Dr. John McCarty for a farm on Berry Creek near where the old Gum Springs schoolhouse stood. Then several years later he sold that place and bought back the farm he had traded to Dr. McCarty. This is the place which is still in the family name. Mrs. Lillie Patterson, widow of Lee Patterson, owns the place and lives on it. All of the family except myself have passed away; Mrs. Lillie Patterson is the only surviving in-law.

I remember that my father once had to go to Burnet to serve as a juror. He went in a buggy. It was so muddy that he had to stop at a farm home about three miles from Burnet and spend the night. He went on the next morning and was a very sick man when he arrived. He was excused from duty and drove back home that day. He went to bed and was down for four or five weeks with typhoid fever.

There were few buggies in those days. I remember that a gentleman from Mill Creek met up with a friend just after seeing his first buggy. He said: "I looked out on the prairie--and here she comes, thar she goes." What would he think of our modern ways of transportation! And there is also quite a difference in our ways of farming too. Just consider the comparison between the tractor and a mule hitched to a double shovel!

THE L. P. PERKINS FAMILY

Lamiel Prewitt Perkins was born in Bexas County near San Antonio on November 19, 1859; died January 11, 1960, at the age of 100 years, 1 month, 23 days. He was married to Eliza Thayer Hemphill on January 22, 1889. Mrs. Perkins was born in Walker County on December 1, 1867, the third of twelve children of Jacob and Eliza Thayer (Gill) Hemphill.

Jacob Hemphill came to Texas from Arkansas when he was five years old. His parents settled near Huntsville, Texas. Shortly after their arrival there, his mother, Mary Hemphill, while riding on horseback opened her umbrella, which scared the horse causing her to be thrown and killed. Jacob Hemphill married Elizabeth Thayer Gill.

Mr. and Mrs. Perkins were married in Georgetown on January 22, 1889, where they lived for a short time before moving near Briggs just across the Burnet-Williamson county line. There their three children were born. They continued to make their home at that location for 29 years before moving into the town of Florence. They lived in Florence for 39 years before going to the Wardenville nursing home in Burnet where they had lived just 11 days before Mr. Perkins died in his 101st year. Mr. and Mrs. Perkins had been married 71 years lacking 11 days at the time of his death.

Mr. and Mrs. Perkins were the parents of three children: Roscoe, who married (1) Lena Cloud--five children, (2) Vida Inman; Ollie Roy, deceased, married Lettie Mitchelltree--two sons; Louise, who died when $6\frac{1}{2}$ years of age.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE G. W. POOR FAMILY

George William Poor was born in England on June 18, 1847. His home address was 11 Hillery Road, East South Sea, Portsmouth, England. His wife, Fannie Weeks Poor, was also born in England, on August 24, 1852, in the vicinity of her husband's birthplace. They were married in England in 1868 and one son, John William Poor, was born there on May 2, 1871. Mr. and Mrs. Poor and their son John came to the United States about 1872, landing at Galveston. They lived on the Slough of the Brazos River at first, then came to Williamson County where they settled on the Conway place near Florence. A few years later--about 1886--they came to this community, living first on the Drake place, later on the J. E. Landon place. They finally bought their own farm about five miles west of Briggs and lived there until their deaths. Mr. Poor died March 2, 1918, Mrs. Poor March 18, 1922. Both are buried in the Mill Creek or DeWolf cemetery.

THE G. W. POOR FAMILY

John William Poor married Eunice Dick and they were the parents of nine children: Dora, Lucius, Dotty, Herbert, Ruby, Pearl, Howard, Glenn and Keith. Mr. Poor is now 90 years of age and lives with his son Keith in Amarillo.

Other children of George William and Fannie Weeks Poor were: Lillie Pearl Poor, born August 23, 1878; married (1) Wash Finchum, (2) Jim Davis. Finchum children were: Frank, Elmer, Raymond and Mollie Francis. She now lives with her children in Houston.

Emma Jane Poor, born August 29, 1881; married (1) Jim R. Smith, one son (adopted) James Smith; (2) George S. James; they now live near Briggs.

Charlie Joseph Poor, born October 20, 1886, died August 1, 1961. Married (1) Addie Cloud, (2) Callie Poor. The Cloud children were Doyle Poor and Gail Poor, who married Marvin Avery.

Minnie Poor, born May 16, 1890; married (1) John Binnion, (2) John E. Langford. Binnion children were Ira, Velma, Thelma and Floyd. She now lives in Briggs.

Mr. Poor spent the greater part of his life as a stock farmer. He was a highly respected citizen and both he and his wife were consecrated Christian people.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE G. A. RATLIFF FAMILY

Gilford Andrew Ratliff, son of Jodie and Mary Jane Chapman Ratliff, and Mary Elizabeth Marrs, daughter of Isaac N. and Sarah Ann Mathis Marrs, were married November 15, 1877, at Florence, Texas. They were the parents of three children: Leona, who married B. F. Lindsey; Forest Paul, who married Miss Eula Clark and is a successful businessman in Burnet; Beatrice, who married John E. Moore, and with whom Mr. and Mrs. Ratliff made their home in their declining years. Lucile Lindsey, daughter of B. F. and Leona Ratliff Lindsey, married Roye Bryan Skaggs and to them was born Roye Bryan Skaggs, Jr.

Mrs. Ratliff's father, Isaac N. Marrs, served in the Confederate Army. He later moved with his family to Kansas; then to Texas, settling near Merrill Town in Travis County; and finally to Williamson County where he engaged in farming and stock raising. Mr. and Mrs. Marrs were the parents of four children: Mary Elizabeth, who married G. A. Ratliff and was the mother of the three children named above; William P., who married Miss Texas Williams; Emma, who married Albert Mantooth of Williamson County; Alice, who married first Charlie Sammons, later E. O. Ramsey of Dallas.

THE G. A. RATLIFF FAMILY

Gilbert Andrew Ratliff for many years operated a freight wagon between Florence and San Antonio, and for a number of years was mail carrier between Corn Hill and Georgetown in Williamson County. He later was engaged in the mercantile business in Florence and in 1906 in association with his son-in-law, B. F. Lindsey, established the Ratliff-Lindsey Company in Briggs. Some years later in association with another son-in-law, John E. Moore, the Ratliff-Moore Company was established. Mr. Ratliff was one of the foremost cotton buyers of Briggs for a number of years.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Ratliff were prominent citizens of this section of Texas and in every possible way supported the causes which meant so much for the development of our community and our state. Mr. Ratliff died December 26, 1942; Mrs. Ratliff March 12, 1950.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE T. H. REAVIS FAMILY

My maternal grandfather, Thomas Harrell Reavis, was born near Oxford, North Carolina, September 29, 1828. He was married to Mary Jane Kendrick in Cherokee County, Texas, November 9, 1865. Three children, Hettie Elizabeth, Mary Edna and Karie Alice, were born to them in that county before they came to Williamson County by wagon in 1873. They settled a few miles west of Florence, and in common with all early settlers suffered the usual hardships of the frontier--my grandmother cooked on an open fireplace at first. My grandfather took corn to Salado about 30 miles away to have it ground into meal. Biscuits on Sunday were a treat.

My Grandfather Reavis operated a grange store in Florence in a store building which was only condemned and razed this year--1960. Later he engaged in farming and the raising of livestock. In the course of years he bought land, and at one time owned 1,200 acres of rich blackland, part in Williamson County, part in Burnet County.

Tradition has it that my grandfather had come to Texas on a visit, that he met Miss Mary Kendrick at a community picnic, that he stayed--and married her. Let that be as it may--they were married and became the parents of nine children: Hettie Elizabeth, born January 16, 1868, Mary Edna, born October 5, 1869, married J. B. McGuire; Karie Alice, born March 11, 1871, married H. J. McGuire; William Whitfield, born September 23, 1873, married Alice West; John Harvey, born November 3, 1877, married Mima Taylor; Thomas Harrell, born February 22, 1881, married Edna Clark; Frederick Wesley, born July 8, 1883, married Gertrude Rountree; Rose Kennedy, born August 12, 1885, married Henry Lindert; George Lucian, born May 16, 1888, married Violet Lindert.

THE T. H. REAVIS FAMILY

My grandparents having settled first in Williamson County, later moved to Burnet County where they erected their first permanent home in the vicinity of Gum Springs in 1884--a house which still stands and to this day remains in the Reavis name. After attending school at Gum Springs the three older children, Edna, Karie and Will, attended school in San Marcos where their aunt, Rosa Kendrick, taught in Coronal Institute. When the Gum Springs school-house was destroyed in 1894 a new building was erected some few miles to the south on Reavis land and there the younger children attended school.

My grandparents were members of the Prairie View Methodist Church, my grandfather serving as a steward in the church. He was a generous supporter of the church and contributed liberally to its welfare. He was a good business manager, an upright Christian gentleman. In later years my grandparents passed some part of their time fishing in Berry Creek which ran by their home, and by playing dominoes. Grandfather died June 11, 1915; grandmother March 31, 1926. Both are buried in the Prairie View cemetery.

I shall never forget the thrill of going to my grandparents at Christmas time--especially the thrill of hanging up a stocking for Santa Claus!

--Mrs. Rose McGuire Kinser

* * *

The following notes may be added about the Reavis family. Thomas went to Wyoming about 1900 when he was nineteen to work on the ranch of his uncle, John B. Kendrick, a brother of Miss Rosa Kendrick, of whom more later. He has remained in Wyoming, returning to Texas only for occasional visits. John, Fred and Lucian also spent several years in Wyoming; Rose remained with and cared for her parents until her marriage in 1913.

John B. Kendrick left Texas in the late 1880s or early 1890s and engaged in ranching in Wyoming. He served in the Wyoming state senate 1910-1914; was elected governor of the state for the term 1915-1919; was U. S. Senator from Wyoming 1917-1929.

Rosa Kendrick, of whom mention is made in the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School taught for several years in Coronal Institute in San Marcos.

Hettie Kendrick taught in the Briggs school in 1905-1906. She and I boarded with the G. T. Fewells that year.

--Rose McGuire Kinser

* * *

John H. Reavis of Saginaw, Texas, has added the following interesting notes about his parents and their family. Even though there is a bit of repetition

THE T. H. REAVIS FAMILY

in his notes and those of his niece, Rose McGuire Kinser, they are used in full here.

* * *

Thomas Harrell Reavis was born at Henderson, N. C., September 28, 1828. He attended school there and at Norfolk, Va. He came to Texas and went into the mercantile business at Rusk, and later at Salem in Cherokee County. He married Mary Jane Kendrick, the daughter of a well-to-do planter near Jacksonville, Texas.

Before he married, the Civil War started and he raised a company of men at his own expense, drilled them, and joined the army as their captain. Before they saw much service he was stricken with a fever. His doctor did not think he would live and he told his men to elect another captain and go ahead, which they did. After several months he recovered and joined the army again, this time in the Cavalry, Ochiltree Regiment, Hood's Brigade, and fought until the end of the war.

When the war started he was a wealthy man; when he got home from the war he had only fifty-two cents in his pocket. He went into the mercantile business again and succeeded in making another stake.

At that time that part of Texas was a very unhealthy place on account of chills and fever, so he decided to move out to what was called West Texas and bought between five and six thousand acres of land in Burnet and Williamson counties. He hauled lumber from Round Rock and built his first house on Berry Creek six and one-half miles west of Florence, which was known at that time as Brooksville. This was in 1872. His first field was fenced with cedar rails that he hauled from the cedar brakes not far from the town of Burnet. He and the men with him carried their guns as the Indians still made raids through that country. It was a good stock country and he raised horses and cattle.

The Indians made only one raid after he settled but fortunately struck north of him, killing one negro boy on Mill Creek and stealing a bunch of horses. Once when asked why he sold a good part of his land, his answer was that he wanted neighbors. He was known far and near for his hospitality; no man ever went to him for help and was refused. He joined the Methodist church and was a devoted member for more than forty years. He was a Democrat and always had a great interest in politics. He was also a great friend of Judge John H. Reagin and a great admirer of James S. Hogg. He said Governor Hogg's folks lived near his store in East Texas and that Jim Hogg came to his store when he (Jim) was a little boy quite often and he gave him candy and nuts many times.

He and his wife had nine children, the first dying when two years old. Their names were as follows: Hettie, Edna, Karie, Will, John, Tom, Fred, Rose and Lucian. There are only three living: John lives in Saginaw, Texas, Tom in Sheridan, Wyoming, and Rose in Dallas, Texas.

THE T. H. REAVIS FAMILY

Thomas Harrell Reavis died at the age of 86 and was mourned by all who knew him.

--John Reavis

* * *

In the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School we had occasion to mention the name of Miss Rosa Kendrick in connection with her association with Miss Mary E. Kennedy, teacher in the Gum Springs school in 1884-85. In reviewing the notes for this history we find that her name has been mentioned again by no less than four or five people--one of them being her grandniece, Mrs. Rose McGuire Kinser of Florence. All have said that for years she taught in some school in San Marcos and that some kind of a building was dedicated to her. We had about given up hope of finding anything definite until Mrs. Jack Syers (nee Edith Dorothy Donaldson), a former student of Coronal Institute, most graciously made available to us her scrapbook, two catalogues, and a photograph of the faculty for the school year 1892-93. Miss Kendrick's name appears in the catalogue for the school year 1888-89; she also appears in the photograph.

Miss Kendrick taught in Coronal Institute. The catalogue for 1888-89 lists her as being in charge of the "Preparatory Grade" and of the work in "Calesthenics" in the school year 1887-88. Having attended Sam Houston Normal Institute in Huntsville in the eighties, she began a teaching career at Coronal which lasted until her death in 1893. We are uncertain about the number of years she taught there, but the mystery of what it was that was dedicated to her is cleared up by Mrs. Syers's scrapbook--for in it in a brief history of Coronal Institute by Roberta Belvin Pritchett we read:

Later, in 1896, the Rosa Kendrick Hall was built, through the generosity of Mr. John B. Kendrick of Wyoming, in memory of his sister, Miss Rosa Kendrick, who was a member of the faculty for several years....

And then in a brief summary of the important events in the history of Coronal Institute is found this note:

The Coronal Club had the old Coronal corner stone and Rosa Kendrick Memorial marker moved to the grounds of the Methodist church and placed with a dedication service in June, 1940, after the old school building had been wrecked in 1939.

Coronal Institute was founded in 1866. It was closed in December 1917--and as noted above was razed in 1939. As a sort of farewell to the old school, there is in Mrs. Syers's scrapbook an undated and unidentified newspaper clipping of a photograph of the "main building" with this legend under it:

THE T. H. REAVIS FAMILY

Story of a school: Old Coronal Institute closed its doors in 1917, but stood an empty monument to education of another era until last year when its buildings fell beneath the wrecker's hammer. Life's tempo was slower in the halcyon days of Coronal, and rules of college decorum were strict.

Mrs. Syers has made for us a small sketch of the Rosa Kendrick memorial stone. Beautiful in its simplicity, it reads as follows:

ROSA KENDRICK
MEMORIAL HALL
1896

She then adds: "Coronal Institute and Miss Rosa were too dear to San Marcos to allow them to fade into oblivion... I was in her room for two years when she had the 'Primary Room.' We organized the first "society" on the Hill, calling ourselves 'The Rosa Kendrick Society.' Her memory is very dear to us."

Miss Kendrick visited the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. On her way home she stopped in Jacksonville, Texas, to visit relatives. While there she was stricken with typhoid fever and died following a short illness. She was an aunt of the T. H. Reavis children mentioned above.

--E.L.

THE G. R. REED FAMILY

Gilmore (Gil) Rowe Reed was born in Rockbridge, Virginia, December 26, 1871; died in Burnet, Texas, February 14, 1953. He was the son of Samuel Newton and Mary Elizabeth (Conner) Reed. Married Lavinia Josephine Robinson January 7, 1894. Mrs. Reed was born in Fannin County, Texas, December 11, 1875. Her parents were Robert Wesley Robinson, born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, December 22, 1837, died in Round Rock, April 22, 1911, and Frances Jane (Cox) Reed, born in Bonham, Texas, April 7, 1847, died January 29, 1928. Mr. and Mrs. Reed were the parents of seven children: Jesse Hubert, born in Bertram, Texas, August 17, 1894; John Alvin, born in Bertram August 17, 1896, died October 22, 1898; Samuel Raymond, born in Briggs, November 7, 1898; Frank Brown, born in Briggs, September 3, 1901; Frances Alice, born in Briggs, February 23, 1904; Robert D., born in Briggs, May 26, 1907; Joseph, born and died in Briggs, December 6, 1909.

Mrs. Reed's parents moved to Briggs sometime in 1897 as Mr. Robinson had engaged to carry the mail from Briggs to Bertram. This he did for about a

THE G. R. REED FAMILY

year when his health made it necessary to give up the route. Mr. Reed followed him on the route for about two years. He later engaged in farming and the raising of livestock. They later moved to Burnet where Mrs. Reed lives today--in her 87th year.

--E.L.

THE W. M. RUSSELL FAMILY

John Henry Russell and Elizabeth Etheredge Russell, early residents of the Mahomet community, were the parents of eight children: Lawson, who married Nancy Patterson, a sister of Mrs. W. M. Russell; W. M. (Marion) (1857-1944), who married Sarah Lee Patterson (1865-1922); George; Jack; Bird, who married first Mollie Hargrove, later Mabel Smith. Ellen, who married J. A. Favors; Minnie, who married R. L. Fraley.

William Marion and Sarah Lee Patterson Russell were the parents of the following children: James, Ollie, Rose, Lawson, Eula, Bertha, Genie, Elmer, Jess, Lem, Pearl. Of these children Pearl, who married Malvin Sherman, has been a resident of Briggs most of her life. Her mother was one of the three daughters of the Henry Patterson family who came to Texas from Tennessee when the children were very young. Enroute to Texas the father became ill and died, but the mother and children continued the trip alone. Mrs. Sherman, widowed, has two daughters: Francille, who married Stoy Roberts, and Oretha, who married Noel Langford of Briggs. There are two grandchildren: Ronnie Evans, son of the older daughter by a former marriage, and Dale, son of Mr. and Mrs. Noel Langford.

Of the children of John Henry and Elizabeth Russell, only two of them lived most of their lives in or near Briggs: William Marion Russell and Minnie (Mrs. R. L. Fraley).

The Russell families played an important part in the development of Briggs and the surrounding community. Staunch, reliable, willing, they were always interested in the public welfare. Pioneer families, they lived and died close to the land they loved.

Robert L. Fraley, who married Miss Minnie Russell, was born in Virginia on March 23, 1868, died September 14, 1958. He came to Texas about 1889, worked at various times for W. S. Dillingham, Aaron Etheridge, John Reavis and Sam Kendrick. He later bought land west of Briggs and was a successful stock

THE W. M. RUSSELL FAMILY

farmer until his declining years when he moved to Lampasas. Mr. and Mrs. Fraley were the parents of three children: Bill, married Roxie Knox; Clyde, married Laura Shell; Richard, married Edna Williams and has two sons, De Wayne and David Allen.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE SKAGGS FAMILIES

Sanford Remley Skaggs was born in Lewisburg, West Virginia, May 25, 1853, the son of Alexander and Mary Remley Skaggs. When about nineteen years of age, he and his brother Howard C. Skaggs came to Texas, settling first in Hutto in Williamson County in 1872 where they stayed one year. They soon returned to West Virginia but remained there only a short time when they went to Kansas where they homesteaded in taking up government land. There being no kind of improvements on the land, both the brothers and their horses were forced to find shelter and protection in dugouts. After a year in Kansas they returned to Texas and worked for seven years as sheepherders for a Mr. Eubank at fifty cents per day. They saved their money and bought sheep which they herded on the wide open ranges between Hutto and Gum Springs. As their herds grew and their profits increased, they bought land in the area generally northeast of Gum Springs--and it was here that Mr. Skaggs lived until his death in 1941.

While still a lad in his teens in his native Greenbrier County in West Virginia, Mr. Skaggs and his brother Howard were honored when General Robert E. Lee, Commander of the Confederate Army, stopped to water his horse Traveler at the Skaggs farm and took time to get down and shake hands with them. This famous horse was raised by Mr. Skaggs's brother-in-law, Mr. Alex Johnson, and was sold to the Confederacy for General Lee's personal use.

Mr. Skaggs was married to Miss Alice Elizabeth Snow July 12, 1893. Mrs. Skaggs was born in Cass County, Missouri, May 6, 1871, the youngest daughter of the ten children of Charles Albert West Snow and Amanda Melvina Fitzallen Hazzard Snow. Her father was born in McIntosh, Georgia, August 20, 1825, the son of Isaac and Sarah G. Harrison Snow, pioneer residents of Providence, Rhode Island, and of English descent. When about fourteen years of age he went to Providence where he resided until his marriage on November 23, 1847. He lived in Hutto for seven years, then moved to Andice, where he died January 25, 1910, Mrs. Snow having preceded him in death December 3, 1907. Mr. Snow and his family were all members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Mr. and Mrs. Snow were the parents of ten children: James B., Jane E., William, Henry, Claude S., C. L., Harriett (married A. R. Smith), John C., Alice Elizabeth (married S. R. Skaggs).

THE SKAGGS FAMILIES

Mr. and Mrs. S. R. Skaggs were the parents of three children: Ludlow Snow (April 8, 1894--September 13, 1952), married Stella Elizabeth Shaffer September 3, 1919; Roye Bryan (November 3, 1895--February 11, 1953), married Lucille Beatrice Lindsey October 30, 1921; Harriett Evelyn (January 30, 1898) married Sidney Roberts Dillingham December 13, 1913. Mr. Skaggs died March 14, 1941; Mrs. Skaggs February 18, 1956. Both are buried in the Mill Creek or DeWolf cemetery at Briggs.

Ludlow Snow Skaggs was born on the family ranch near Briggs on April 8, 1894, and was united in marriage to Stella Elizabeth Shaffer September 3, 1919. He was a veteran of World War I, having served in the 145th Field Artillery both in England and France. He was honorably discharged January 26, 1919. In 1936 he was elected to the office of County Commissioner of Precinct 2 of Burnet County and re-elected in 1938. During World War II he was appointed a member of Burnet County Ration Board and had the distinction of being the only member who did not miss a meeting of the board during its four years of service. He served as a county school trustee for twelve years, as president of the Rural Telephone Company, and all his adult life was ever interested in civic and community enterprises.

Stella Elizabeth Shaffer was born in Travis County September 14, 1898, but grew to young womanhood in Burnet County where she taught school for many years. Her parents were John Henry Shaffer (June 26, 1869--December 14, 1935) and Estelle Heffington Shaffer (August 14, 1875--May 23, 1918). They moved to the Smithwick community in Burnet County in 1905 where Mr. Shaffer was a stock farmer. Stella Elizabeth graduated from R. E. Lee High School in Burnet May 25, 1915. She immediately took and passed an examination for a teacher's certificate and taught her first school that fall at OK in Burnet County. She next taught at Fairland, then at the Langford school on Rocky Creek where she met and married Snow Skaggs. She then taught in the Briggs school until 1922, and during the past forty years has served as a substitute teacher when regular teachers were absent or otherwise incapacitated. Her chief interest has been working in the Church of Christ, devoting much time and talent to this work. As Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, she long ago became interested in the early history of Briggs, especially in the families who came to this part of Burnet County beginning in the 1870s and 1880s. She was of inestimable help in putting together the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School; her help in assembling these notes is likewise of equal value. (The concluding sentences of this paragraph by Ernest Langford).

Roye Bryan Skaggs, second son of Mr. and Mrs. S. R. Skaggs, was born November 3, 1895. He served in World War I as corporal and was honorably discharged January 3, 1918. He was married October 30, 1921, to Lucille Beatrice Lindsey, only child of Ben Frank and Ona Ratliff Lindsey. Mr. and Mrs. Skaggs were the parents of one son, Roye Bryan, Jr., born January 24, 1923. Mrs. Skaggs's father, Mr. B. F. Lindsey, was born near Florence January 25, 1875, the son of Thomas and Margaret Acker Lindsey. Her mother, oldest daughter of Gilbert A. and Elizabeth Marrs Ratliff, was also a native of Williamson County, being born August 28, 1876. She and Mr. Lindsey were married September 27, 1903, and moved to Briggs in 1906.

THE SKAGGS FAMILIES

B. F. Lindsey was a prominent merchant in Briggs for many years, being a partner with his father-in-law in the firm of Ratliff-Lindsey Company. He died November 20, 1932; Mrs. Lindsey on July 15, 1931.

Roye Bryan Skaggs, Sr. was a great lover of the outdoors and spent much time hunting and fishing. His son, Roye Bryan, Jr., followed in his footsteps and is now widely known for his expert marksmanship, having hunted deer, elk and moose, bear and other big game in the wild and rough terrain of Montana, Colorado, British Columbia, Canada, and Alaska. His knowledge of guns makes him an authority for many needing such advice. He has in his house a rare display of mounted animal heads. He spends much time during the winter months hunting snakes, having captured and killed more than 1,000 rattlesnakes in the last two years.

Harriett Evelyn Skaggs was born January 30, 1898, only daughter of S. R. and Alice Snow Skaggs, and was married to Sidney Roberts Dillingham on December 23, 1913.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

* * *

Other members of Mrs. Stella Shaffer Skaggs's immediate family:

May Bell Shaffer (1894--1917); married Allen Hall--two children: William Aubrey (1913--1920) and Thelma Gertrude (1915--), who married Allen Mayne and had two sons, William Allen and Charles Everett.

Lonnie Wilson Shaffer (1896--1953); married Winnie Leona McClish (1899--1947).

William Clarence Shaffer (1900--1937); married Myrtle Hall Summers--W. C., Jr., married Hilda Hyatt; Lyman Doyle, married Margaret Worthington--two children, Jeffrey and Mende. W. C., Jr. and Lyman Shaffer veterans of World War II, having served with distinction in the U. S. Navy.

John Henry Shaffer VII (1902--1959); married Hester Gibbs--two daughters, Elouise Vitovsky and Flora, who married Fred Dawson.

Laura Beatrice Shaffer (1903--); registered nurse at Dallas Surgical and Medical Clinic.

Charles Leslie Shaffer (1905--1932); oil field operator.

Mary Ellen Shaffer (1907--); assistant county clerk, Dallas County for 14 years; registered nurse.

Ruth Gertrude Shaffer (1909--); married Joe W. Gibson; both business administrators, Austin.

THE SKAGGS FAMILIES

Hazel Leona Shaffer (1910--); married William L. Bible--two daughters, Patsy Juanelle and Mary Ruth, who married Horace M. Brock--two daughters, Sandra and Denise. Hazel Leona is a private secretary in the field of business administration.

Justin Alphonzo Shaffer (1912--); veteran of World War II and Korean conflict; awarded 13 major battle stars; married Marjorie Martin--two sons, John William, teacher and coach in Austin, married Joan Saunders--two daughters, Marji and Joan; Justin Alphonzo, Jr., who has just completed a foreign tour of duty with U. S. Navy; employed by the city of Austin Power and Light Company.

Herbert Lynn Shaffer (1916--); married Dorothy Stagner--one daughter, Sammy Lynn; veteran of World War II, in business in Dallas.

Children of the J. H. Shaffer and Iris Hays family:

Wendell Shaffer (1927--); in the Army; married Suzie Ono--three children.

Maxine Shaffer (1929--); civil service; married Harper Hemmingway--three children.

Gerald Eugene Shaffer (1930--); war veteran, U. S. Border Patrolman; married Helen Barber.

Johnette Rhea Shaffer (1935--); government employee; married William Fisher.

THE JAMES L. SMITH FAMILY

James Lenox Smith was born in Locke, Scotland, a suburb of Dundee, on May 14, 1863. He was the eldest son of James and Margaret Napier Smith. He was educated in Scotland. When he left his native land he intended to sail for New Zealand; but at his mother's request he accompanied his brother Jack (John S. Smith, later principal of the Briggs school) to Texas. They were twenty and eighteen years of age at the time.

Some years after their arrival in Texas they bought adjoining tracts of land; the tract which James purchased was bought from his brother-in-law, Mr. J. E. Landon, who had previously purchased it from a Mr. John Newmarch, who had also come from Europe. Mr. Newmarch was a good friend to Mr. Landon as the latter named his second son John Newmarch Landon. The property in question is now owned by Mr. Bryan Skaggs of Briggs.

My father's father--my paternal grandfather--was James Smith; he came to the United States in 1884 and lived in Burnet County until his death in 1892. He

THE JAMES L. SMITH FAMILY

was the first person to be buried in the Prairie View cemetery near Briggs.

James Lenox Smith was married to Hannah Julia Carpenter on July 26, 1893. She was born near Farmersville in Collin County on February 11, 1873, the daughter of James Monroe and Laura Elizabeth (Truly) Carpenter. Her parents desiring that she and her brother Jesse should have every educational advantage possible later moved to Georgetown, Texas, where she was graduated from Southwestern University in 1892. Her parents then moved to Briggs that fall and it was there that she met and married Mr. Smith.

My maternal grandfather, James Monroe Carpenter, was born in Arkansas on May 14, 1843; my maternal grandmother, Laura Elizabeth (Truly) Carpenter, in Mississippi on August 18, 1837. She and her parents were enroute to Texas when she met my grandfather, who was also enroute at the same time. They were married in 1869 and lived in Briggs from 1892 to 1904. My brother Bill and I stayed with them in the school year 1902-03. My grandfather was a carpenter by trade as well as by name. He built the Prairie View Methodist church and many other buildings in and around Briggs.

Father and mother moved to their home two miles north of Briggs soon after their marriage. There they lived until 1917 when they sold their ranch to Mr. B. F. Lindsey. They moved into Briggs that fall and my mother died there on August 15, 1918. In 1924 my father moved his family to Lometa where he lived until his death on January 8, 1941. Both are buried in the Prairie View cemetery.

Both my father and mother and their children attended the Methodist Church. Father was superintendent of the Sunday school and a steward in the church for many years. Mother was organist for 26 years and a teacher in the Sunday school for the greater part of that time.

Father and mother were the parents of 11 children--six boys and five girls: James N. (Bill), deceased, married Zada Jones in 1921; Gordon, married Ivis Potts June 23, 1918, daughter of Ulus and Fannie Potts and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Moore of Briggs--one son and three daughters, lives in Lometa; Max, married Leslie Klahn of Rosenberg in April 1929--twin daughters; lives in Houston; Frank (Pete), married Opal Carothers in Lometa in June 1928--one son, lives in Houston; David, married Opal Howard of Lometa on December 24, 1928--one son, lives in Houston; J. L. Jr., married Billie Burton of Natchez, Mississippi--one son, lives in Houston; Mary, married Jack Underwood September 18, 1927--three sons, one daughter, lives in Lometa; Ruth, married C. L. Deere at Briggs May 4, 1919, lives in Del Rio; Louise, married Chester O'Bryant June 22, 1953, lived in Del Rio; Maggie, married first Grady Hutchinson (deceased June 21, 1947) July 13, 1936, second, Jay Cummings, lives in Amarillo; Grace, who was 3½ months old when her mother died, married Frank D. Casbeer of Lampasas May 30, 1945, lives in Houston.

--Mrs. Jack Underwood
(Nee Mary Smith)

THE J. L. SMITH FAMILY

Note: Those who may have access to the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School will note that Mary Smith first appears in the picture for the school year 1902-03. She is the winsome little miss holding the slate.

--E.L.

THE J. S. SMITH FAMILY

Many a person who is now nearing or has reached the biblical age of three score and ten will remember John Shands Smith as principal of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs school during the years 1894-1900. Familiarly known as "Jack" Smith, he was respected by all who knew him and endeared himself to the people of this community. Mr. Smith was born in Dundee, Scotland, in 1867 and died at his home near Briggs on October 24, 1940. A fairly complete biographical sketch of his life is included in the First Quarter-Century of the Gum-Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School.

John McCarty Smith, son of John Shands and Mary Harkrider Smith, was born October 25, 1898. He was married to Miss Hazel Clements of Florence on February 5, 1926. They are the parents of two children, James David and Joyce LaDell Smith. Mr. and Mrs. Smith have lived for years about one and a half miles from Briggs where they own and operate a commercial chicken and turkey ranch. Mr. Smith is a civic-minded citizen, having served as a member of the board of trustees of the Briggs school system and as secretary of the telephone company. He is unusually polite and friendly and a scholar of note.

Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Smith were the parents of another child, a daughter, now Mrs. Margaret Mitchell of California. She is remembered by her many friends as a woman of charm, smart and friendly, one who never saw a stranger, and as an interesting conversationalist.

Mr. James Smith, the father of Mr. J. S. Smith, was the first person to be buried in the Prairie View cemetery.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE MRS. MELVINA SMITH FAMILY

Mrs. Melvina Smith (August 4, 1856--June 23, 1939) came to Texas shortly after her husband was killed in the Civil War. She brought her two young sons, John Hasting (August 6, 1880--December 28, 1932) and George Pomeroy (October 18, 1874--February 15, 1926), with her and settled on 160 acres of land which she pre-empted from the state of Texas and homesteaded. The land lay along Mill Creek about five miles east of Briggs. (It was on this same land that the first artesian well in the whole community was drilled early in the 1900s--of which more elsewhere.) The land was without improvements and not one acre was in cultivation. Her sons being too young to work, she set out by herself to clear the land and provide some kind of shelter. She grubbed trees, plowed, planted, worked the crops, and eked out a livelihood for herself and her children. Later, as the boys grew to manhood they bought adjoining land and increased the quarter-section to double or triple its original size.

The boys in due time became of age and married sisters: Hastings married Ona, Pomeroy married Rosalee, their wives being the daughters of Jim and Lucy Reese. The sons and their families continued to make their home with their mother as long as she lived.

Hastings and Ona Smith had three daughters and one son: Ruth, Ruby, Jewel, Walter. Ruth married James Pevy; Ruby, first Lamar Hickman, later Nelson Taylor; Jewel married Hallie Mott; Walter married Ella Faye Crawford.

Pomeroy and Lee Smith had a daughter Mildred, a son O. B., and a daughter Margaret Estelle who died in infancy.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE A. W. STEWART FAMILY

Americus Wilson (Mack) Stewart was born at Mahomet on February 6, 1881, and lived all of his life in and near Briggs. He died January 30, 1957, and is buried in the Mill Creek cemetery.

Mr. Stewart's parents were Columbus and Mariah Johnson Stewart. His father was born in Overton County, Tennessee, his mother in Marion, Mississippi. They came to Texas in March of 1852 and settled at Gabriel Mills. They were the parents of twelve children: Maggie, married Bill Greer; Columbus C., Jr., married Alice Hatley; Andrew, married Lizzie Blackmon; Flora, married Henry Nealey; Ada, married Clarence Kinnette; Frank, married Lillie Anderson; Luther, married Annie McGinety; John, married Mary Long; Belle, never married; Edd, married Bertie Mooney; Viola, married Jim Heine; Americus Wilson, married Florence Spencer on December 20, 1900.

THE A. W. STEWART FAMILY

Americus Wilson and Florence Spencer Stewart were the parents of three children: Laudy Wilson, married Velma Taylor--three children, Laudell, Harry Dayton and Treva Gayle; Carl Alexander, married Merle Watson--three children, Carla, James Ray and Donna Faye; Mary Maxine, married first John Driska, later Nelson Harrison. Great-grandchildren are Denise and Jerri Lynn Stewart, daughters of Laudell and June Callicott Stewart; Mitzi Crooks, daughter of Carla Stewart who married Dean Crooks. Harry Dayton Stewart married Doris Alex.

Mr. A. W. Stewart--"Mr. Mack" as he was called by everyone--was a fine blacksmith and practiced his profession in Briggs for upwards of thirty-five years. He was a noted conversationalist and Bible scholar. His widow, Mrs. Florence Spencer Stewart, is the oldest living person who was born in Briggs. She has lived here all of her life and is in her 79th year; her mother, Mrs. Katie Davis, is in her 96th year. The Stewarts have long been members of the Church of Christ and are staunch Democrats.

The Stewart family are talented musicians and singers. They have always been active in community affairs and the upbuilding of our state and nation. Laudy Stewart has been of particular help to us in putting these annals together in that he has been our authority for many of the statements which we have made concerning the facts and events of early days in Briggs.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE W. J. STILES FAMILY

William Jackson Stiles (October 1, 1859--May 11, 1935), whose mother was a Holt, married Sallie Ann Williams (December 7, 1870--February 8, 1936) of Georgetown. They lived four miles east of Briggs on Mill Creek all of their married lives. Their son, Frank (Dude) Stiles, now owns and resides on the home place.

Sallie Ann Williams was the daughter of Ike and Elizabeth Roberts Williams, who were prominent and prosperous ranchers of Williamson County from Georgetown to Mill Creek in Burnet County. Their descendants now own much of their original holdings.

Other Stiles children are John, Annie and Alma, who live in Briggs; Tom, married Lucy Hausenfluke--one son Kenneth; Arthur, married Lillie Belle Whitely--one son J. T. who married Georgia Edwards; Ray, married Wanda Williams; Barbara, married Roland Cottle; Aaron and Charles.

THE W. J. STILES FAMILY

Aaron Stiles died December 14, 1917, in service in World War I. He and his father and mother are buried in the Mount Moriah cemetery.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

THE A. J. TAYLOR FAMILY

Andrew Jackson Taylor was born in North Carolina on October 19, 1847. His parents moved to Tennessee when he was a small boy and settled near the town of Henderson. When the Civil War broke out he was not old enough for service so his father told him to stay at home and take care of his mother and the children--which he did. In later years he spoke of Northern soldiers and their raiding of livestock, of their taking his one good work mare which he used in farming and hiding her in a thicket, and of his never being able to get the mare back.

Andrew Jackson Taylor grew to young manhood in Tennessee and married Miss Sarah Jane Stanfield. To them were born seven children: Emma, who married Joe West and had two sons, Durward and Robert. Durward has two boys and a girl; Robert a boy and a girl. Durward and Robert have a successful dairy business near Saginaw; John Robert, who married first Bird Barnett, second Jessie Trot, by whom he had two children, John and Iowana; James Andrew, who married Ella Patterson; Stephen (Steve) and Colista, twins, the first marrying Leora Daniels, the second marrying first J. C. Jordan, later C. O. West; Mima, who married John H. Reavis; Hattie, who married A. H. Reynolds.

The family moved to Texas in 1876 and bought land in Wise County near Springtown. Finding that that location did not suit him, Mr. Taylor moved farther south and bought land in Burnet County at the head of Berry Creek. Here he farmed and raised cattle and horses the rest of his life. Mr. Taylor died September 25, 1921, mourned by all who knew him. He was a loyal Democrat and a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. He is survived by two of his children: Mrs. John H. Reavis of Saginaw, Texas, and Mrs. A. H. Reynolds of Lampasas. Three of Mr. Taylor's brothers, G. W. (Dade), Stephen (Steve), Jessie, and a sister whose husband was Huntley Daniels, came to that part of the country later.

Colista Taylor's daughter Lillian first married C. W. Cloud and had four children: Helda, who served in the WAAC in World War II; Mima Ruth, who married Ray Roubideaux and has a daughter Ann; Kelse, who married Peggy Wilson and has three children; and Kathryn. Some years after Mr. Cloud's death, Mrs. Cloud married Carl Spinks. Both Mr. and Mrs. Spinks are talented

THE A. J. TAYLOR FAMILY

musicians and singers and take active parts in social and church activities. See under "Five Generations in Briggs" for more about these families.

Colista's daughter by her marriage to C. O. West had a daughter Erma Kathryn who is married to Bill Gunn and lives in Houston.

Mima Taylor, sixth child in the A. J. Taylor family is married to John H. Reavis and lives in Saginaw, Texas. They have five children: Joe H., Louise, Kate, Charlie, Emma. Joe H. first married Zulu Reavis (deceased), later married Annie Stocker in Montana. Louise married Elza E. Williams of Briggs. They have three sons--Harrell, Dean and Keith, all of Saginaw. Kate married Doyle Parks of Saginaw. They have two daughters, Zulu and Linda. Zulu married Bud Holland of Fort Worth. They have one son, William. They were later divorced; Zulu then married Edwin Harkins of Fort Worth and had one son Dennis. Charlie married Dessie May Moore of Grand View. They have two daughters, Wanda and Judy. Wanda married Jack Copelin of Fort Worth. They have two sons, Lindel and Wendel. Judy is not married. Emma married Fred Wartelle of Saginaw. They have three children: Jimmie, Johnnie, Catherine. Jimmie married Shirley Thorne of Fort Worth. They have one daughter, Debbie. Johnnie married Peggine _____. They have two sons, Julie and John. Catherine married Donald Cole of Saginaw. They have two daughters, Cherry and Suzy. Emma later married Bill Anz of Fort Worth.

--John H. Reavis

THE G. W. (DADE) TAYLOR FAMILY

George Washington Taylor was born in Henderson County, Tennessee, August 22, 1853; married Queen U. Maness, born in North Carolina November 17, 1852. Married in Tennessee, they came to Texas in 1877; lived first in Florence before settling in the community of Gum Springs. Mr. Taylor died in 1931, Mrs. Taylor in 1924.

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were the parents of seven children--five boys, two girls: Moab, married Eva Hart, died 1947; Jack, married Cora Daniels, died 1958; Emzy, married Lucy Nichols, died 1924; Della, married C. M. Bates, died 1954; Rose, married Will Paul; Ernest, married Mamie Cashen; Lee, married Velma Champlin. Ernest and Lee now live near Briggs and own the old home place which their father bought about 1895.

Mr. Taylor was a public-spirited citizen. He organized and was president of the company which brought the first telephone to Briggs soon after 1900. He farmed all of his life, and broke much of the land still in use in the days when farming was done with walking plows and oxen. Familiarly known

THE G. W. (DADE) TAYLOR FAMILY

as "Uncle Dade," Mr. Taylor was held in high regard and esteem by all who knew him.

Other brothers and sisters of Mr. Taylor who came to the community once known as Gum Springs were: Stephen, married Nancy Adeline Ross; Jack, married Sarah Jane Stanfield; Ditch, married Debbie Lee Medlin; Caroline, married Thomas Washburn; Sarah, married Huntley Daniels. An older brother Daniel died in the Civil War.

Moab Taylor's children: Ola, married I. C. Greer; Clyde, married Sallie Baker; Leila, married John Baker; Velma, married L. W. Stewart; James, died 1911; S. A., married Ruth Knight Taukley; Curtis, married Viola Limmer; Goldie, married Robert Glass; Roberta, married Cecil Flydenfieldt; Weldon, married Edna Earl Perry.

Ernest Taylor's children: Othell, married Paul Coffey; Christine, married M. C. Glenn; Ilamae, married Duncan Cantrill; Ernest, Jr., married Louise Ward; Fred Lee, married Mary Ward; Mamie Ruth, married Paul Brookerson.

Lee Taylor's daughter DeVeda Mae married Murrell Stafford, Jr. Jack Taylor's children: Will, married Lynn Cashen; Lessie, married Vernon Greer, died 1935; Essie, died in infancy; Euda, married George Lane; Maude, married Myron Greer.

(While this paragraph in no way is concerned with the G. W. Taylor family, it is a matter of interest to note that among the first operators of the telephone company which Mr. Taylor helped organize mention may be made of Jess Gude, Belle Stewart, Maude Rainey, Robert Pearce. Miss Rainey and Mr. Pearce, both deceased, were later married and were the parents of four children.)

--E. E. Taylor

THE WEEKS-DICK FAMILIES

This sketch of the Weeks-Dick families is compiled from notes furnished by Mr. John G. Key III of Winters, Texas, and from notes of the late Mrs. Cora Weeks (nee Cora Dick), also of Winters, which she furnished us at the time of the compilation of the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. Mr. Key has also made available receipts for taxes, a record of the sale of a bale of cotton, and a "Dimit" from the Gum Springs Alliance--all dating from 1882 to 1900, and all being documents concerning the affairs of his great-grandfather, Mr. J. W. Weeks. Because of their

THE WEEKS-DICK FAMILIES

historical significance in the saga of Gum Springs, three of them are reproduced following this sketch of the Weeks-Dick families.

* * *

J. W. (Bodie) Weeks and his wife Martha A. McCollum Weeks and six of their children came to Texas from Henderson County, Tennessee, in the mid-1870s and settled on a farm at Gum Springs. Four of their ten children who grew to maturity were born there. An eleventh child, one of the older children, is said to have literally cried itself to death when only a few weeks old. The ten children were: John Isaac, Lucy, Betty, Clint (a girl), Elbert, Mamie, Newt, Essie, Will, Arthur.

J. W. and Martha Weeks lived on their farm until their deaths. He died in 1911 while visiting in the home of his daughter, Mrs. Will Dick, in Runnels County. Martha Weeks died on the old home place several years after the death of her eldest son, John Isaac, who died in 1923.

All of the children of J. W. and Martha Weeks married except Will. John Isaac (August 29, 1862--December 15, 1923) married Cora Dick in 1887 and was the father of seven children; Lucy married W. D. (Doc) Smart; Betty married Houston Smart; Clint married Gig McLean; Mamie married Robert H. Dick in 1888 and was the mother of thirteen children; Essie married Will Dick; Elbert married Mary Lusk; Arthur married Birdie Hutto; Newt married _____.

Robert H. (Bob) Dick came to Gum Springs from Pontotoc County, Mississippi, in the early 1880s and taught school in and around Gum Springs for a few terms before sending for his father, mother, and family, of which he was the oldest child.

Matt Dick and Georgia Hayden Dick came to Gum Springs in 1884 with five children: Cora, Will, Una, Jennie and Jess. Three other children, Alma, Laura, and Minnie had hied in Mississippi. Virgie, the youngest child, was born at Gum Springs.

Cora Dick had attended Troy High School in Mississippi and had studied music and voice. We remember her telling many times how she played and sang for the "singings" at Gum Springs. She was proud of her music--and so were we!

We believe that Matt Dick died at Tennessee Colony and that Georgia died in Jennie's home at Ogle near Lampasas. Jennie was the wife of Joshua Watson at that time; it was her third marriage. Georgia died in the 1920s.

All of the children of Matt and Georgia Dick married and raised large families. Robert H. married Mamie Weeks; Cora married John Isaac Weeks; Will married Essie Weeks; Una married J. W. Poor; Jennie married Douglas Sawyer; Jess married Minnie Stuart; Virgie married Ross Ramsey.

THE WEEKS-DICK FAMILIES

John Isaac Weeks and Cora Dick were married in 1887 and moved to Mountain Home, Arkansas. He taught school there for awhile; their first child, Era, was born there in February 1889. By the fall of that year they had returned to Gum Springs where he taught in the year 1889-90. He later taught in the Gum Springs school in 1892-93 and 1893-94.

Other children of John Isaac and Cora Weeks were Edna, Freddie, Charlie, Arnett--all born at Gum Springs; Grace, born in Palestine, Thelma in Goldsboro.

John Isaac and Cora Weeks moved to Palestine in the fall of 1898 and lived there seven years. They then moved to Coleman County where he began farming in the Goldsboro community. Both died in Winters: John Isaac in 1923, Cora in 1960.

Charlie Weeks never married. Arnett Week's only son, Arnett, Jr., is the last male descendant of the John Isaac Weeks line although his (JIW's) brothers had several sons. Arnett Weeks, Jr. is superintendent of the Jim Ned Valley public schools.

* * *

Of the several tax receipts of J. W. Weeks we reproduce that for state and county taxes for the year 1882.

No. 1615	Office of	COLLECTOR OF TAXES	
		BURNET COUNTY	
RECEIVED OF Weeks, J. W.	the following		TAXES
amounts, in Payment of State and County			State ad Valorem \$.37
Taxes for the year 1882, on personal			County ad Valorem .30
property and the following described			Revenue and
real estate:			School Poll 1.50
			County Poll .25
			Total \$2.42
Burnet, Texas, Jany. 9th, 1883			M. H. Corker, Collector
			(SEAL)

The receipt for the sale of the bale of cotton is of interest in that it shows the price for which cotton was selling in 1884.

CASON & ESTES

Nov. 17/84

Bot of J. W. Weeks--
 1 B/c #80 510 9.20
 Cr.
 By Weighing .05
 By Cash 46.85/46.90

46.90

But the document of greatest interest is the "Dimit" of Mr. Weeks from the Gum Springs Alliance. We will reproduce it first and then describe it a bit

THE WEEKS-DICK FAMILIES

more in detail. But before we do that let us add that a short discussion of the Alliance will be found in the section GUM SPRINGS in the earlier pages of the text.

Gumspring Alliance
Burnet County
Texas Feby 20 1892

at a regular meeting of Gumspring Alliance held on
the above date Bro J. W. Weeks a member of this
Alliance in good standing was on virtue of his ap-
plication granted a Dimit from this Alliance

J. F. William Pr
J. W. Poor Sec

(SEAL)

The "Dimit" is written in pencil on what appears to be about a quarter of a page of ledger paper and whoever wrote it signed both signatures. The "William" must be Williams as there were a lot of people by that name around Gum Springs in the 1890s. But what intrigues us most about the "Dimit" is the seal of the Alliance. Just slightly over an inch and a half in diameter, except for a crease in the paper, the impression is as crisp as if it had been made yesterday. Around the perimeter is GUM SPRINGS ALLIANCE NO. 23 TEXAS; in the center is a bit of ornament and BURNET COUNTY. We can not be too sure about the number as the crease in the paper has worn through it. But the figures 23 seem to show up by the use of a magnifying glass.

--E.L.

THE GEORGE E. WEST FAMILY

George E. West and Bell Gann were married in Navarro County in 1872 and settled in the community of Gum Springs in 1882. Four children were born to them before their coming to Gum Springs: Alice, Arrie, Charlie and Marvin. These four children all attended the old Gum Springs school.

Alice married Will Reavis in 1902 and lived near Florence. They had four children: George, Nina, Anna and Ralph. George lives in the old family home of his parents near Florence; Nina is Mrs. Stanton Gardner and lives in Arlington; Anna is Mrs. Eldon Tomlinson and lives in Florence; Ralph lives in Georgetown. Alice Reavis died in Florence in 1941, Will Reavis in 1942.

THE G. E. WEST FAMILY

Arrie West married Bessie DeWolf in Briggs about 1902 and in 1908 moved to a ranch near San Angelo where he now resides. They had two sons, Glenn and Merton, both of whom now reside in San Angelo. Bessie DeWolf West died in 1930.

Charlie West married Colista Taylor in Briggs about 1906. They had one daughter, Erma Katherine, now Mrs. Bill Gunn of Houston. Following Colista West's death in 1921, Charlie West married Ella Smalley in Bertram in 1923. They lived in Austin many years, Charlie dying there in 1950; his widow still resides in Austin.

Marvin West married Beulah Goodloe in Briggs in 1908. They had two daughters: ✓
Lois, now Mrs. Bob Warren of Austin; Marvaline, now Mrs. Ford Samuels of Austin. Marvin West farmed and ran a gin at Briggs most of his life. He died in Austin in 1958.

Elmo West was born at Gum Springs in 1882 and died of typhoid fever in 1900.

Villa West was born at Gum Springs in 1884. She lived in Briggs for many years and died in Austin in 1935.

Oscar West was born at Gum Springs in 1886; he died in 1899 as the result of being kicked by a mule.

Carl West was born at Gum Springs in 1888, went to school at Taylor's Gin and Briggs, and married Edna Williams there in 1910. They now live in Breckenridge. They had two sons: George, who lives in Breckenridge, and Billy, Deceased.

Joe West was born at Gum Springs in 1890, married Lela Ed Harris, and had one son who now resides in Dallas. He died in Austin in 1958.

Erma West was born at Gum Springs in 1892, married J. T. (Tom) Patton in Briggs in 1919; they have lived in Corpus Christi since. They have two sons: Bill, who lives in Houston and Bruce, who lives in Flagstaff, Arizona.

George E. West was primarily a farmer. He was also a ginner. He built at Gum Springs what was known as the West gin--the first in the community to be equipped with steam power, and which he owned and operated for a quarter of a century or longer. He also had a corn mill in connection with his gin. Customers lined up on Saturday "waiting their turn" to have their corn ground into meal. Money was never exchanged for grinding--a "toll" was taken out of the corn to be ground.

Mr. West was a public-minded citizen, one who was always ready to turn a hand for the benefit of his community. He served as a school trustee for many years. He died in 1916, Mrs. West in 1922.

--Erma West Patton

THE A. O. WOODBURY FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. A. O. Woodbury and their three children moved to the Briggs community from Williamson County in the late 1890s and settled on Mill Creek about two and a half miles out. Mr. Woodbury was born and reared near Tyler, Texas; Mrs. Mary Jones Woodbury near Madisonville, Texas. Their children attended the Briggs school.

Henrietta Woodbury, born in 1884, married Clarence Dillingham in 1905. They were the parents of three children: Lorena (1906--1909); Blanche, born in 1909, married Jack E. Mabe--one son Jackie D. Mabe born in 1944; Sherwood (1914--1937). Henrietta Woodbury Dillingham died in 1948; she and her two children are buried in the DeWolf cemetery.

Earl Woodbury, born in 1888, went to Montana about 1911 and worked on the J. B. Kendrick "OW" cattle ranch. He worked for several years, then filed on a homestead and gradually bought adjoining land until he owned a fair-sized ranch. He married Madeline Kirk of San Angelo (formerly of Briggs); they made their home in Montana until he retired in the early 1950s when they sold their ranch and moved to Sheridan where they built a fine home. They had two children: Doris, married Alan Richardson of Sheridan--one son Jimmy; lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Donald, married Edith Ann Scott of Sheridan--two children, Susie Jo and Christie Donna; lives in Billings, Montana.

Vera Woodbury (1894--1960), married Harry Horn in 1910--one daughter, Juanita, born at the 11th hour, 11th day, 11th month, 1911. Juanita married Ben C. Smith of San Angelo. They live in Austin and have a daughter Martha Jane who is married to David Rehm and has one son Michael David, who also lives in Austin.

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Horn had been married 50 years when she died in 1960. She was buried in the DeWolf cemetery.

--W. C. Dillingham

* * *

There are many other families of eighty or a hundred years ago who should be in these annals. We hope that their descendants by reading these biographies will be encouraged to prepare similar ones of their ancestors who helped blaze the trail that led to Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs.

The early families being few in number, it should be no surprise to find all kinds of relationship existing in later generations. If one is interested enough he can trace all kinds of kinship through marriage and intermarriage--so much so that the old saying, "He is kin to everybody around here," just about turns out to be true.

--E.L.

CHURCHES IN GUM SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

One of our greatest disappointments in putting these annals together is that we have been unable to find anyone who would undertake the writing of the history of the churches of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs.

What little we know of the early days--the 1880s or before--leads us to believe that the first settlers were predominantly of the Primitive Baptist faith, although it was close on towards 1900 before they erected a church building. That these early settlers were Primitive Baptists should come as no distinct surprise to us, for a score or more of the first families to settle around Gum Springs had come to that area from Tennessee. And we know that Primitive Baptist churches were rather common in that state in the early and middle 1800s. Extremely Calvinistic in nature, the church was opposed to missions, missionary societies, instrumental music, Sunday schools, and considered immersion to be the only form of baptism and a prerequisite for participation in the Lord's Supper. They also believed in the practice of footwashing and held that their ministers must be called of God and ordained. Because of the strict adherence to their "faith and practice" they were also called "Hard-shell" Baptists. The Mount Moriah Primitive Baptist church building was erected about 1900--possibly a year or two before. It was wrecked by a windstorm some forty years later. The few members of the faith who still live in the area are without a church home. When they do attend services of their faith it is in neighboring communities of adjoining counties.

Every indication is that the first fairly regularly scheduled church services of the Gum Springs community were held in the old Gum Springs schoolhouse. This dual use of the building has been mentioned by several people. John Reavis says that it was built for a "schoolhouse and church house too"; Mr. Henry Campbell says that the churches of the community met there before the Prairie View Methodist church was built; and Mr. J. V. Morris says: "The Tabors did much for the community--started a Union Sunday School, the first religious movement in the community. A Baptist church and then a Methodist church were built." But Mrs. W. J. Taylor writes more in detail in a letter dated May 17, 1960:

Throughout the years 1887-1897--which included my entire time of residence in that community, though I've never lost touch with the good people there--as for the churches and ministers in charge, that is "easy." Gum Springs schoolhouse was the only church, and the ministers were the "pioneers" who were faithful and zealous enough to ride or drive from Florence and often much farther to give us a Sunday appointment. There was one good man who lived in the community, Uncle Huntley Daniels, who sometimes preached to good crowds in the little schoolhouse, but not regularly. Then there was Uncle Bob Baker of the Baker school community who looked after the Primitive Baptists. And Mr. J. J. Thompson who

CHURCHES IN GUM-SPRINGS-TAYLOR'S GIN-BRIGGS

lived in Florence preached for us once a month. (Mr. Thompson was a Baptist minister.) As for the Methodists, there was none until the Prairie View church was built in 1891-92. There were no resident ministers until much later.

The Prairie View Methodist church building which so many have mentioned was in all probability the first church building to be erected in the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs community. It was erected in 1891-92 and was dedicated on the third Sunday of May, 1892. Later, in the spring or summer of 1906, the building was moved into Briggs where church services and a Sunday school were held for many years. The building was moved to Lampasas about 1955 and converted into a parsonage. The last regular minister was Albert Loudon, a student from Southwestern University at Georgetown, who preached one Sunday a month. Regular services were discontinued about ten years ago. Members of the church now attend worship in neighboring communities.

The first Missionary Baptist church in Briggs was moved from a point on the Burnet-Williamson county line in the mid-1890s. Mr. J. J. Thompson of Florence was in all probability the first pastor--part-time at that, as he preached every fourth Sunday. The church building is still in use although it has gone through two or three remodeling jobs. These include extensive repairs, the addition of four classrooms and a pastor's study, the construction of a recreation room. Additional land has also been purchased; a residence for the pastor has also been bought and redecorated. The church is now served by Rev. George Kouri.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Probably the first meeting place of the Church of Christ congregation was in the Mill Creek schoolhouse about four miles east of Briggs, and the time was in the late 1880s or a few years before. Prior to that time, and during the following years, evangelistic meetings were held annually--some under brush arbors, later tents and tabernacles.

As an independent congregation in Briggs, the Church of Christ was organized in 1926 when seven members of the church secured the use of the Methodist church building and met Sunday afternoons. Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Cehand, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Hasty, Mrs. J. T. Hall, Mrs. A. W. Stewart, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs. Shortly thereafter the Langford church disbanded and moved its entire membership to Briggs. During the early years of the local group the Florence congregation assisted greatly by attending the meetings--especially with the song services as there were no finer gospel singers than the Caskey families.

A permanent church building was erected in 1927, funds to defray its cost being borrowed from the bank with every member signing the note. An exception was made in the case of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Hasty who gave \$100 instead. The first sermon in the new building was delivered by Silas Howell on December 27, 1927. Mr. Howell subsequently held many meetings here. A house for preachers to live in was built in 1953, Vernon Ripley and wife being the first to occupy it. An addition of three rooms to the church building was erected in 1956.

Other evangelists who have held meetings through the years are: Ernest Christian, R. T. Howell, L. V. Nobles, C. M. Moser, Clem Hoover, James Fry, J. B. Nelson, H. W. McClish, Horace W. Busby, Dean Rhoades, Everett Rhoades, J. C. Eubanks, Jesse C. Eubanks, Sr., Robert Craig. Song leaders have included Lathel Caskey 20 years, John McClish, L. G. Glover, Vernon Collins, Shelby Caskey, Jack Franks, Ross Jenkins, J. M. Cehand, O. V. Ripley. Elders have included George S. James, Arch Davidson, J. M. Cehand, L. L. Jones, Mack Nettleship, J. M. Caskey, H. A. Davis, Dailly Kendrick, C. C. Castleberry; deacons, Rual Smith, Spencer Johnson, J. M. Hasty, R. R. Crooks, C. C. Castleberry. Local ministers: H. W. McClish, O. V. Ripley, Deryl Love, Walter Everett, Byron Beasley, Melvin Wise, James Everett.

The Church of Christ uses the scripture as the only guide. There are no organic ties of any kind among congregations; nor are there any headquarters or officials except the elders and deacons. Following the teaching of the Bible closely and speaking where it speaks and keeping silent where it is silent, the worship is carried on with the commandment to be observed on the Lord's Day. Singing from the heart with no use of musical instrument is in harmony with "Sing and made melody in your heart to the Lord" and "God is not worshiped with men's hands." Communion service each Lord's Day is a memorial referring to Christ's death and pointing to his coming again--this in compliance with the scripture: "On the first day of the week, when they came together to break bread." Contributions are only on the Lord's day and

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

then as "he has been prospered and purposed in his heart." Women take no role in worship services as they are commanded "To keep silent in the church." Prayer and study of God's word are a part of the worship service.

The word "reverend" is not given to ministers as the word is used only one time in all the Bible and that in reference to God. All titles of any kind are avoided. Every congregation selects its own ministers. No written creeds are used as the New Testament is the only authority for every act of worship.

* * *

Note: This account of the organization and history of the Church of Christ in Briggs is the work of Mrs. L. S. Skaggs, a charter member of the Briggs church. Even before the church was organized on a permanent basis, she worked with the early groups who met here and there for worship, and in one way or another she has been identified with them through these many years.

THE CAMP MEETING

No account of the religious life of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs community--certainly for the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth--would be complete without some attention being given to the camp meeting. Such meetings are still conducted throughout the Southland but they seem to have lost a lot of the fervor and excitement of sixty and seventy years ago. For at that time they were weeks of great religious exhortation against the evils of sin and wickedness, the Devil and his machinations, hard liquor, dancing, card-playing, and other vices--some real, some imaginary.

The typical camp meeting was strictly an open-air affair. At first "housing" was the brush arbor; later it was the tent or tabernacle. The latter was usually the property of the evangelist. Getting it ready for services was simply a matter of erecting a central pole or two, driving twenty or more stakes, raising and tying. But the erection of the brush arbor was something else. That was a community affair, a more or less permanent structure requiring the efforts of boys and men for days in its construction. Essentially it consisted in cutting fairly tall trees which forked ten or twelve feet above ground, setting them securely in holes twelve or fifteen feet apart, laying straight timbers in the forks, placing other straight members four or five feet apart at right angles, and covering the whole with brush cuttings. Once so erected, the framework of an arbor would last several years. Renewing it was the simple matter of removing the dried brush, burning it, cutting and placing new material.

The revivalists who came that way before and after the century turned came to save the lost and to do battle with Satan. And there was much argument about who the lost were and what it was they were to be saved from. For the people of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs were good people--they are still good people! But come the revivalists did, fuming fire and brimstone, mouthing dire threats of eternal punishment, offering sure and certain ways of salvation, and promising everlasting glory for the saved. All of this went on for weeks at a time, with dinner and preaching on the grounds every Sunday. For which people came from far and near--by wagon, hack, buggy, on horseback, or simply walked--each family bringing its own dinner and all of the necessary appurtenances. All of these they spread under the shade of trees, or the arbor itself. They ate together by groups of ten to twenty or more, thus giving them an opportunity to catch up with their visiting.

One has to go through such a camp meeting to appreciate what it is all about. The mere writing about it fails to convey any idea of the fervor which can be aroused by a real spell-binder. And nowhere was his spell cast more forcibly than at the mourners' bench--a bench at the very front, one reserved especially for seekers after salvation. For it was here that the revivalists "wrought mightily with the Lord" for the souls of the unsaved.

RELIGIOUS DEBATES

Public debates on religious questions were rather common in the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs area before and after the turn of the century. The last one which I recall was in the summer of 1904 or 1905--one which I attended for the greater part of a week. The debaters and the questions under debate have long since been forgotten. But I do remember that a minister of the Church of Christ was pitted against a minister of the Baptist faith and that they had at it twice a day for five days--at ten in the morning, three in the afternoon. I also recall the first session--I guess you would call it an "organizational meeting." Both sides wrangled the greater part of the period over the appointment of a moderator. They then spent an hour or two on the appointment of judges--two from each side of the faiths represented. Elaborate rules of procedure were then drawn up--who should open, who should close, who would rebut whom, and all that. A "point" system was also agreed upon by which each judge and moderator set down points as the debate progressed so that at the end of the week the outcome could be determined by the simple matter of adding points! But that particular debate was not resolved that easily. For when the result was announced an immediate challenge was issued for a new debate to begin the following Monday morning! I seem to recall that the challenge was declined but that an agreement was reached whereby the debate would be renewed later in the fall.

Lest readers of six decades later may wonder what the debating was all about, a word or two to clarify that question may be in order. First of all, one must remember that by far the greater number of debates were between what at that time were called the "Campbellites" and the Baptists. The former, first called Disciples of Christ, had succeeded in establishing what was called the "reformation movement" in religious faith and belief--a movement which in a way impinged on Baptist doctrine. The result was inevitable--differences in doctrine, practice, interpretation of the Scriptures, what have you. And the effort to settle these differences led to debates--debates which before the smoke of battle had cleared had become rather commonplace, especially throughout the Southland.

What questions, then, did dedicated men spend so much time in debating? Couched in anything but the formal language in which the questions were stated, we may mention the following: Instrumental music in church worship; conditions and modes of baptism; the doctrine of total depravity; the characteristics of the true New Testament church; ecclesiastical hierarchies; missions, Sunday schools, church literature; and so on and on--to all of which we may pause to give a moment's notice today but which sixty to a hundred years ago were taken in deadly earnest. So much so in fact that many of the great debates were taken down verbatim and in published form have found their way into our older and larger libraries.

Even though I have long since forgotten who the principals were in the debate of 1904 or 1905 and the questions upon which they debated, two things remain clearly fixed in my mind. In the first place, the debate was held under a brush arbor over which a new "roof" had been placed--probably for this occasion; and second, the fervor with which the protagonists went about presenting

RELIGIOUS DEBATES

their arguments. Each brought his own reference books--there must have been a dozen or twenty of them all told--and for direct reference to Holy Scripture each read from the same Bible, a ponderous tome with heavy board covers which had been placed on the pulpit from behind which each spoke.

Finally, just what did such debates accomplish in rural areas like Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs? The answer is--nothing. Attendance was made up largely of people who were neighbors, or at the farthest lived near by--people who had common interests in life--people who knew nothing about theology, and cared less. For the greater part they were all farmers; and even though they might be at variance in their religious beliefs, they all bought from and traded with the same stores and sent their children to the same school. And come a call for help, no road was too long nor night too cold and dark when a fellowman was in distress.

THEY CARRIED THE MAIL

According to information available at the moment, mail first reached the community of Gum Springs via Florence. Later a star route was established between Briggs and Bertram with the carriers living in Briggs. For years on end transportation was buggy or hack pulled by horses. Trips were made daily except Sunday. Ordinarily they were made in daylight hours. But about once a week--or twice a month--the trip to Bertram started well before daylight. Such early departures were made to meet the 9:30 a. m. train in Bertram so that "drummers" who had spent the night in Briggs could get on to Burnet and be about their business. And then in bad weather--and especially during the long winter rains--departures and arrivals were early and late as the round trip to Bertram and back often required fifteen hours or more. But good roads and the automobile came along later and with them the horse-and-buggy days passed into oblivion. What had been an all-day trip became a matter of hours. Today the "distance" from Briggs to Bertram is a matter of minutes. What with rearrangement in routes, and other postal innovations, the star route just about went the way of the horse and buggy--so much so in fact that mail to and from Briggs today is via rural routes.

As nearly as we have been able to learn their names, these man "carried" the mail to Briggs. No attempt has been made to establish dates or the order of appointment. W. A. Nichols, S. A. (Dan) Tucker, Lawson Tucker, R. M. Pearce, Hugh Hale, Gil Reed, Andrew Moore, Dick Hall, Wilson Pruett, Bill Cox, Isam Whitley, Albert Edwards, Lloyd Ellason, Marvin Ellason, Charlie Rice, A. J. Clark, J. C. Williams, Johnny Williams, Edwin Smith, Granville Knox, a Mr. Bradley.

Mr. Ward Hines carried the mail from Oakalla to Briggs from June 1912 until his death on December 24, 1941. For the first eleven years he made the trip by horse-and-buggy. In 1923 he bought a Model T Ford, enabling him to speed up deliveries. His route was a circuitous one, one which made it necessary to cross Rocky Creek five times. Mr. Hines is remembered by all who knew him as a quiet, accomodating man. Mr. Garrett Henderson was appointed carrier following Mr. Hine's death. He was succeeded by Mr. J. V. Morris on a temporary basis; in 1948 Mr. Daryl Edwards was appointed carrier and is still in service.

Another bit of information about early mail carriers comes from the G. S. A. in Washington. In response to a request about who carried the mail when, this note came from G. S. A., on August 8, 1961:

A site location report of December 31, 1887, from the postmaster at Briggs to the Post Office Department shows that the mail route from Kempner to Oakalla was to be extended fourteen miles to provide mail service to Briggs. H. V. Childress was the mail contractor at that time.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs & E.L.

THE PEDDLING WAGON

No account of the community life of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs of the 1890s and early 1900s would be complete without something about the peddling wagon. As a matter of fact, the peddling wagon came to be a common sight throughout the Midwest--and probably elsewhere for that matter--during the last decades of the nineteenth century. And I had every opportunity to become intimately acquainted with the operation of one as my grandfather, Mr. G. T. Fewell, was a "traveling peddler" for years. I should add that he did most of his peddling in the spring and early summer, for come the fall of the year he could always be found in the engine room of Mr. West's gin. That was where his first interests were anyway--running his peddling wagon was largely a matter of bread and butter when there was no cotton to gin. Like the oxcart, the walking plow, the three-seated surrey, the peddling wagon has long since gone the way of the wind. But during its day it served a useful purpose--it took the store to the people. My grandfather's wagon was--to me at least--a veritable storehouse on wheels. He "peddled" everything--overalls (we called them overalls), blue denim shirts; socks, ties, handkerchiefs; calicos, percales; snuffs, tobaccos; threads, buttons, needles; nails, hammers, rules; sheetings, domestics, tickings; toys, whistles, candies, gums; ointments, cure-alls, and a score of other items--all of which he would trade and barter in exchange for chickens, turkeys, guineas, eggs, pecans, what have you.

As a general rule he made one-day runs. By leaving early in the morning--say on Monday--he would head out towards Oakalla. Before nightfall and arrival back home he had driven twenty or thirty miles and stopped at as many farm houses. On Tuesday he would head out towards, say, the Rocky community--and so on through the week. (It was on one of the trips towards Rocky that I met a chap whose son registered in my classes in architecture at Texas A & M College a full forty-five years later!)

In the course of a week or ten days my grandfather would gather up sufficient poultry, eggs, and other produce, to warrant a trip to Lampasas where he disposed of his wares and bought new supplies for his wagon. He always traded with the Barnes-Higdon Company. And much to my delight, for I often went with him, we always put up at one of the local wagon yards where we met other peddlers, goods-box philosophers, and I'm afraid a goodly number of ne'er-do-wells--and cooked our own meals over an open fire! Two things made a lifelong impression on me in Lampasas. First, those wires, baskets and levers in the Barnes-Higdon store by means of which money was whisked to a cashier on a balcony; second, the electric lights.

Reminiscing has taken me completely away from the peddling wagon and the part it played in community life. The "store" part of the wagon was built to fit onto a regular frame. On either side were doors which would let down to form a kind of counter on which wares could be displayed. Behind these doors were shelves, cubbyholes, drawers, hooks, where drygoods, notions, and novelties were kept--while at the rear of the wagon was a tier of coops in which poultry was kept during the day.

THE PEDDLING WAGON

Just what place did the peddling wagon have in a rural community like that around Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs? The answer is a very real one--the peddler took the store to the people. To be sure his stock of goods was extremely limited; but those he did carry constituted the day-to-day necessities of rural life. By taking them to the people he made a trip to town unnecessary--and going to town wasn't always a pleasure jaunt, what with country roads often being no more than mere trails or turning rows.

--E.L.

SQUARE DANCING

Many differences may be noted in today's square dancing and that in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs of sixty and seventy years ago. Today it is a business--what with professionals as instructors, schools, fancy and imaginative dress for both men and women, and the seriousness with which it is all taken. Too, there are radio and television, highly trained "hill-billy" bands, the raucous voice of the loud-speaker, conventions, and all that--all of which is a far, far cry from the days when young and old "formed squares" and danced in Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs.

Until about 1904 the people of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs had nothing approaching a dance hall. It was in that year that the addition to the school building was erected and the second story of the addition became available for public meetings. But even this arrangement lasted only a few years as the schoolhouse was completely destroyed by the tornado in April 1906. Prior thereto dancing was done in homes--and on occasion on a platform of sorts erected for one-day stands during annual picnics. whereas any number of squares may be formed today, in the days which interest us at the moment the dancers were fortunate if two or three squares could be formed at once. For as a general rule the dances were held in private homes--in the "parlor" of the larger homes. The usual procedure was to remove all of the furniture from, say, the living room, find some kind of a box or heavy chair for the "caller" to stand on, arrange for the convenience of the "fiddler"--sometimes there was also a banjo or a guitar--and have at it. But only after being very forcibly reminded by the caller that no shenanigans would be tolerated: "We have accepted the hospitality of (calling the host and hostess by their first names) for an evening of good clean wholesome fun and by dam that's the way we are going to keep it." And thereby hangs a tale about my Uncle Jim which I might as well recite here as later.

Uncle Jim was my maternal grandmother's only brother. There is a family record somewhere that tells us his parents christened him William Davidson Reese--but I don't believe it! For years on end I knew him only as Uncle Jim--nothing more, nothing less, except that he was always in demand to "call" at the dances. And the tale I would tell relates to Uncle Jim and his calling a dance at our house--as I recall now during Christmas week of 1900. Anyhow, dancers had arrived, the fiddler had been made comfortable, Uncle Jim stood on a box, and in a voice which all understood started the festivities of the evening by announcing: "We have gathered here for fun and frolic. There'll be no cavortin' or carousin' (dropping his g's). Any fellow who misbehaves himself will settle with me--and he'll by dam pretty well like it.

"Tune up your fiddle
And rosin your bow;
Choose your partners
And do-si-do."

Later in the evening some uninvited rowdy sought to crash the party. His

SQUARE DANCING

breach of the social conventions of 1900 was whispered to Uncle Jim. Quick as a flash he stopped the music and said: "Wait a minute, folks; there's some young whuppersnapper wants to have words with me." Fortunately for everybody Uncle Jim persuaded the young "whuppersnapper" to go his way--but he returned the next afternoon to apologize to my parents for his misbehavior and to send word to Uncle Jim that it would not happen again. Uncle Jim is gone now but I have an idea that somewhere he is "squarin' 'em off" and warning them that there'll be no "cavortin' and carousin'"--and by dam pretty well making himself understood!

While this is very personal and probably has no place in this story, I would like to say this about Uncle Jim. Everybody around Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs knew him for upwards of sixty years. In a way he was a law unto himself. Strictly obeying the customs and conventions of the social order, he was eternally at outs with the Republicans and the government--they were forever interfering with his business! It is probably just as well for him that he missed these latter days of government by bureaucracy.

--E.L.

GREAT BASEBALL TEAMS

Briggs probably fielded its best baseball teams in the early 1900s. With Mr. W. S. Dillingham as manager and outfielder, the teams took on all comers. Florence, Andice, Liberty Hill, Bertram, Killeen, Copperas Cove, Kempner, Burnet, Hog Mountain, Llano, and others--all fell to our pitching, hitting, and baserunning.

Pitchers were Jack Horn, Zeke Purcell, Hubert Williams, Jim (Vol) Taylor, Jess Priest, Jack Williams.

Catchers were Lee Nichols, Worden Williams, Talley Greer, Ollie Wells, Lon Petty, Ernest Spradlin, Olin Parsons.

Infielders were Jim Taylor, Meardy Priest, Curtis Perry, Harry Harrell, Bladen Shipp, Mack Baker, Clarence Dillingham, Frank Davis, Cory Snow, Ernest Davis, Charlie Snow, Will Davis, Walter Dillingham, Clinton Perry.

Outfielders were Dennis Perry, Easley Rutledge, Vesta Snow, Etherby Davis, Major Tubbs, Bart Davis, Bradley Dunlop, Dee Cantwell, John Moore, Julius Landrum.

And the umpire--"a man who never called one wrong"-- was Fred Chittenden.

One game which we won 1-0 was talked about for years. We were playing Kampner and the victory came about in this fashion. Briggs was at bat in the top of the ninth with the score zero-zero. Our first batter, catcher Ollie Wells, hit a slow roller to the shortstop who had a sure out at first. The first baseman bobbled the ball and in attempting to catch the runner on his way to second overthrew second. The center fielder backing up second overthrew third as the runner made his way towards that base--and on the overthrow Ollie scampered home with what proved to be the winning run. For the next six men were out in order: three for Briggs in the rest of its turn at bat, three for the opposition in its turn.

Sounds like a Dick Merriwell yarn? Well, it happened--nearly sixty years ago.

Our uniforms were of black sateen trimmed in white braid, which accounts for our name--the Briggs Black Demons.

--Clarence Dillingham

P. S. I played with some of these teams for awhile--as pigtail, retriever of foul balls, that is! EL

ARTESIAN WELLS AND A LESSON IN PRONUNCIATION

The first artesian well in the vicinity of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs--at least the first within the memory of people now living--was drilled on the Hastings and Pomeroy Smith land about 1904--possibly a year or two earlier. I can remember the excitement it created--in fact, a couple of boys and I walked the five miles or so to see it for ourselves. People came from all around to see water running out of the ground! One of the most excited men in the whole community was Mr. William McDaniel. It was told of him at the time that when he saw the phenomenon he is reported to have said, "By gad, I'll have one myself before Saturday." He was a little premature in his timing, but within a moon or two there was a flowing well on his property! And, if I remember correctly, the same three of us walked the four miles or so to see Mr. McDaniel's well.

The following has nothing to do with artesian wells. Rather it is a recital of Mr. McDaniel's annoyance with an itinerant preacher and his (the preacher's) mispronouncing the word "fatigued," and my learning that "directly" (three syllables) is not pronounced "dreckly" (two syllables). To appreciate the first story a word or two about Mr. McDaniel is in order. In the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School, John H. Reavis refers to him as the "Poet Laureate of Mill Creek." That is clue enough; but we'll add that he always pronounced his words with a crispness that gave them something of a poetic ring. His telling of the preacher's ignorance of pronunciation made such an impression upon my mind that I can remember his words to this day. The occasion was a Saturday afternoon (Mr. McDaniel always came to town on Saturday afternoons, come rain, storm, or Johnson grass) in Mr. J. T. Hall's general store--and a crowd made to order for Mr. McDaniel.

On the Wednesday evening prior to the Saturday in question Mr. McDaniel had somehow fallen in with two itinerant preachers--at some church service as I recall his story. In any case, he had invited them to spend the night at his home. And thinking a short scriptural reading followed by prayer would be appropriate, Mr. McDaniel invited the preachers to do just that. Whereupon one of them opened his Bible and began to read--and paused to comment at the end of "Sleep on now, and take your rest." His comment was his undoing--what he said was "They were FAT-i-gued." To hear Mr. McDaniel tell the story, he fairly well hit the ceiling with the mispronunciation of "fatigued." "Why, damn it all," he roared, "I almost turned the ignoramus out in the night."

The correct pronunciation of "directly" was a lesson to me. I had hired out to work for Clarence Dillingham to help him rid his cotton of grass and weeds. For some reason or other Mr. McDaniel was in town in the middle of the week and I had asked him for a ride to Clarence's place. "I'll be ready di-RECT-ly," he said, and with that turned away to make a purchase--or more likely, to engage someone in conversation. I was afraid to run home to ask what "di-RECT-ly" meant--and as I recall now saw no one near who might know. So I just stood still--and waited for Mr. McDaniel. At long last we were on the way--and somewhere along the way I made bold enough to ask Mr. McDaniel what

ARTESIAN WELLS AND A LESSON IN PRONUNCIATION

he had said. "Why," he said, "I said, 'I'll be ready di-RECT-ly'. What did you think I said?" "That is what I thought you said, only I thought it was 'dreckly,'" I replied rather meekly. Well, to make a long story short, I learned how to pronounce "directly" that afternoon--for I'm sure that with every revolution of the buggy wheel during the next half mile I called out "di-RECT-ly" with a degree of clarity that even Mr. McDaniel approved of. But what he would have thought of my ending a sentence with a preposition--well, it's too late to find out!

--E.L.

FROM THE DEVILS RIVER TO TAYLOR'S GIN

In addition to compiling for us some interesting biographical data on the M. D. Hall family, Mrs. Una M. Gilbert (nee Una Marie Hall) of Wichita Falls has in her inimitable way described for us the travels of the Hall family from the Devils River country to Taylor's Gin. By reading between the lines of her notes--plus a sentence or two in some of her letters--we would guess that the trek was a rather circuitous one, that it probably involved thirty days or six weeks, and that the distance covered must have been close to 300 miles. For we will note that the family went via Baird to visit relatives--and Baird is in any direction but a straight line from Sonora to Briggs. While she does not say as much in her description of the trip, we are assuming that the family left from Sonora or nearby. She mentions elsewhere in her letters that her family moved from that area to Taylor's Gin in the early 1890s. The concluding paragraphs of this section are hers--without quotation marks except to enclose bits of conversation.

* * *

I well remember when my immediate family came to Briggs--the post office was then Taylor's Gin--from the Devils River "a la the covered wagon," except that instead of one we had two wagons, both covered. I have no idea how long the journey required, but I do remember that we made only ten or twelve miles a day--possibly fifteen on a good day's run. My dad was very fond of horses and said that on a trip like that they should never be made to trot--just walk, from sunup to sundown--which they did day after day after day. I remember that the weather was very warm when we left. But by the time of our arrival in Taylor's Gin we had to have campfires at night. And speaking of campfires--the person who has never cooked and eaten by an open fire has missed something along the way. You know, the old-time Dutch oven--the three-legged iron kettle with a rimmed cover to hold coals or hot ashes.

Well, after several days out we stopped at Baird to visit Grandfather Berry's family. I have no idea how long we stayed there--possibly a week or two. From Baird we wound down through Lampasas County to Briggs--no, Taylor's Gin.

The trip from the Devils River country made many memorable impressions on my $4\frac{1}{2}$ -year-old mind. I remember that Peach and I rode on a springy mattress, faced backwards and looked out of the back of the wagon. One thing we especially enjoyed was the prairie dog "towns." At first we were allowed to trudge along behind the wagon and try to catch prairie dogs; but no luck--they were too quick for us. I do remember that one day I thought I had one caught too far away from his hole--but in my eagerness to catch him I forgot to watch out for cactus plants. The result of that was that my mother had to spend half of the day pulling "stickers" out of me. Well, from that day on there was no more chasing of prairie dogs or trudging along behind the wagons--we were "kept in" the rest of the trip.

Another time we were crossing a river when my dad spied on the opposite side

FROM THE DEVILS RIVER TO TAYLOR'S GIN

a cow trying to make her way up a steep bank. She would climb up, slip back, climb up, slip back, until dad had stood it as long as he could. He finally said: "It's getting dark. We need to find a place to camp but I can't leave that cow to fall in and drown herself." With that he got out, threw a rope over her horns, and pulled her to safety. As we went on after crossing the river we met a man looking for a cow. When my father related to him what he had just done, the man was sure that the cow was his. He then expressed his gratitude and said that he had a house "aways" up the road, that some people had just moved out that day, that there was plenty of firewood, and that we were welcome to stay there, wash up our clothes, and rest the horses. As I recall now, we stayed there a day or two--over a weekend I think. And the house, the trees, the beautiful clear stream of water--all these made a lasting impression on the minds of road-weary kids. Long years afterward when I was reminiscing with my mother about this occasion she completely disillusioned me by saying: "Yes, you children had a great time playing at that house. But the beautiful house which you remember was just a two-room shack."

There were many other interesting incidents on that long trip--my first--but what seems to me now to have been the happiest of all was our arrival in Briggs--or Taylor's Gin as the community was then called. We went in through Lampasas as Grandfather and Grandmother Hall were living on the McGuire farm three miles north of Taylor's Gin. After staying with them for a short time we established residence in the house which later belonged to Mr. Sid Dillingham. Following Grandfather Hall's death, we moved into the McGuire place with my widowed grandmother and my two uncles, Dick and Tom Hall. Later we moved into Briggs--by this time the name of the post office had been changed. It was there that we children started to school; however, my half-sister Maud Rainey and I had started to school in the days of Taylor's Gin.

BY WAGON TRAIN TO TEXAS

This interesting narrative of the trials and tribulations of a family making its way by wagon train to Texas was written by Mrs. Lena Landrum Gallatin of Liberty Hill. Her manuscript has been edited only to the extent of maintaining continuity in the story.

* * *

My grandparents, W. B. (Bill) and Mary (Mollie) Williams, came to Texas from near Pontotoc, Mississippi. They left there in the fall of 1881 in a wagon train consisting of fourteen wagons. A new bride and groom started with them in a wagon drawn by oxen. The bride soon grew homesick and she and her husband turned back. The train traveled very slowly, making only a few miles a day. My grandparents had five children in the train (four more were later born in Texas) and every last one of them had whooping cough. My mother, who was the oldest of the children and twelve at the time, often said she "whooped and hoofed" her way to Texas--the "hoofing" coming about as the children did a lot of walking because of the slow progress of the train.

The train crossed the Mississippi on a ferry at a point where the river was two miles wide. At one camping place by another river which they had to cross a dam broke in the night. My mother, who was sleeping on one of the "made-down" beds, happened to stretch her hand out and it went into the water. She awoke, spread an alarm through the camp, and along with the others hurriedly moved to higher ground.

At another stream they were camped for the night and the womenfolk were cooking supper when two men carrying a huge bear they had shot came into the camp. The hunters eased the bear to the ground when my mother's sister, the late Mrs. Alma Deere, went and got on it. The hunters told my mother to get her off as the bear might yet be alive. We have always called this aunt "Texas Alma" because of the many stunts and scrapes she got into in coming to Texas.

Another day the train was stopped by rustlers who demanded of one of the men (I think it was my grandfather) that he give him one of the horses he was driving. They claimed the horse had been stolen from them and would make trouble if he were not returned. Well, the horse was turned over to the rustlers--and a spare horse took his place in the train.

Late one evening my mother and the other children were grazing their cattle when a man on horseback came out of the woods and drove the cattle away. He came back a short while later and told my grandfather he had rounded up the cattle and had them in a pen and that he could have them if grandfather would pay him \$15 for his trouble. The cattle came on to Texas.

The men in the train liked to play jokes on one another, especially on my grandfather. One day as they traveled along one of the men found a feed trough by the side of the road. He took it and fastened it to the back of my grandfather's wagon. And what was grandfather's surprise when a short time later an officer rode up and demanded the return of the stolen trough!

BY WAGON TRAIN TO TEXAS

This particular wagon train came through the Indian Territory--what is today the state of Oklahoma. The train divided upon entering Texas. My grandparents came down to Brooksville, a community which grew into the Florence we know today. They went to live on the Gann place near Gum Springs. My mother and possibly others of the children attended school at Gum Springs for awhile.

There were few settlers in the community when my grandparents reached Texas. Most of the land was out; it was mostly prairie with a few groves of trees scattered about. One day my grandfather was out looking for his oxen--in the Dillingham pasture near where the Briggs homecomings are being held. The grass was tall and thinking to see farther he climbed upon a knoll nearby. Some men in a grove on the knoll saw him and waved him away. They were dressing a beef which they had rustled.

Law and order had not come to prevail too completely in that part of the country when my grandparents arrived. Two of the most-wanted men of the time were the leaders of what was known as the Barber-Whitley gang. One night when officers were pretty sure that Barber was at home they surrounded the house and demanded that they be let in to search the place. The man who met them was most agreeable but asked that he first let his daughter or sister out as she was expecting a baby and did not feel too well. To this the officers readily assented. Whereupon Barber re-entered the house and disguised himself as a pregnant woman--and walked out between the officers! He went on to an old mill, crawled over or through a wire fence where he left a piece of his dress, and went running through a field. The officers soon discovered that they had been duped but lost the trail after a short chase. About halfway between Florence and Briggs he stole a horse and saddle; he turned the horse loose near Briggs and made his getaway.

My grandfather farmed most of his life. He also did a lot of hauling to Lampasas, often using a six-horse team due to the condition of the roads. He lived near Briggs until his death on October 22, 1926; my grandmother died March 9, 1924.

MR. JACK JUBY'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE OUTLAWS

Mrs. Gallatin's reference on the preceding page to Barber and Whitley is echoed in a way by Mrs. Fred J. Juby in her notes about her father-in-law, Mr. John (Jack) Juby, and his experiences with the same two.

* * *

The following experiences were often related by Mr. Juby during his lifetime.

Well before the turn of the century Mr. Juby owned a large herd of sheep which required the services of a herder by day to keep wolves away. Mr. Juby often did the herding himself and on occasions had the unpleasant experience of having the outlaws Barber and Whitley ride up and begin talking to him. They were always armed. Mr. Juby's only weapon being a stick or a shepherd's crook, he of course treated them with a certain degree of respect. He could quite well visualize what might happen to him if he crossed them in any way. There was always the possibility of his being "tapped on the head" and thrown in a hole or thicket.

About the time of Mr. Juby's experiences with Barber and Whitley their headquarters were supposed to have been in the neighborhood of Mahomet. They were also reported to have hidden out in the heavy timbers north of Briggs as well as down towards Florence. They rode over the country stealing horses; and when they needed meat they would kill a yearling, take what they wanted, and ride on. Whenever they rode up to Mr. Juby they would get off their horses and engage him in conversation. They were constantly on the alert, looking this way and that, knowing that they were wanted men. On one occasion Mr. Juby's saddle horse had strayed away with his saddle on. When Barber and Whitley heard about it they offered to find and return the horse--which they did. Mr. Juby offered to pay them but they would take nothing from him.

Sometime later Mr. Juby was summoned before the grand jury then meeting in Burnet. He was questioned at length about his associations with Barber and Whitley. He told his story in a straightforward way and wound up by saying that any member of the jury would have done the same thing under similar circumstances. The jury agreed with him.

THE BEN EADS STORY

The story of the finding of a body hanging from a tree and of its later being identified as the body of Ben Eads was fresh in the minds of the people of Briggs around the turn of the century. It is still recounted by old-timers and has only recently been repeated to me by John Juby, son of Mr. Jack Juby, an early settler in the community.

Mr. Juby and Mr. John Landon came to Canada from England in 1871. Later they went to Michigan, then drifted to Oregon, and came to Texas in the early 1880s. They landed in Austin at the time of the state capitol building was under construction and worked on it for several months. While working there they heard of land in Burnet County which could be had for a dollar an acre, and liking the country and the climate they decided to go have a look for themselves. This they did--and were so well pleased that they bought several sections. What are known today as the Jack Smith place, the J. L. Smith place, and the original Juby homestead, were all parts of the purchases made by Mr. Juby and Mr. Landon.

At the time of the finding of the body--which was about 1884 or possibly a year or two earlier--Mr. Juby and Mr. Landon were living on what is known as the Jack Smith place. Mr. Juby was herding sheep a mile or two away when he noticed buzzards flying around a grove of live oaks. His curiosity aroused, he went to see what it was all about when to his great surprise, he discovered a body hanging from a limb of one of the largest trees. He left his sheep and made his way to the nearest neighbor--the home of J. W. Drake and his brother-in-law, a Mr. Wilcox. There he reported what he had discovered. A casket being out of question, Mrs. Drake furnished the men with a bed sheet to wrap the body in. The three men then went by to pick up Mr. Landon to go with them to bury the body. They dug a grave some few feet away, cut the rope so that the body fell on the sheet, and carried it to the grave. There they buried the body and placed large flat rocks over the grave to keep animals from digging into it. After they had buried the body Mr. Wilcox went to Burnet to notify the sheriff of what they had found and done. The sheriff and his deputies were soon on the job of trying to run down the culprits. They took the rope that was used in the hanging to Brooksville (now Florence) where they found a merchant who had sold it or a similar piece of rope two or three days before to two men. They also succeeded in identifying the body as that of Ben Eads who lived near Georgetown in Williamson County. They also learned that Mr. Eads was riding a horse when he left home but neither horse nor saddle was ever found. The supposition was that the men who had bought the rope were horse thieves, that Mr. Eads knew too much about them, and that this was their way of destroying the evidence--that is, of keeping Mr. Eads from testifying against them.

The Ben Eads grave can be seen to this day. It is on a prairie incline about two miles west of Highway 183, out from Briggs towards Lampasas. It is a well-known landmark to people of this community.

--W. C. Dillingham

THE BERTRAM ENTERPRISE SIGNS "30"

In the introductory paragraph to "The Tornado of April 1906" we expressed our regret that "progress" had made the publishing of small-town weekly newspapers a losing proposition. Our reference was directed towards the Florence Vidette which suspended publication in 1948. Somewhere in these notes we want to pay our respects to a long-time contemporary of the Vidette--the Bertram Enterprise--and this seems to be about as good place as any to do it. For the same forces which have worked so long against so many other weeklies eventually caught up with the Enterprise on April 27, 1961. In the issue of that date Editor N. Oliver Cox wrote in part: "With this issue of the "Enterprise we are saying farewell to our advertisers and subscribers." As simple as that--or is it?--another fine weekly whose lineage ran back to the very beginning of the twentieth century signed "30" and called it a day.

There is another reason why we want to mention the passing of the Enterprise. Much of what has happened in Briggs during the editorship of Mr. Cox is recorded in its columns. Births and deaths, who visited whom and when, activities of the school and the churches, weddings--all of these and other items of interest are tucked away in the files of the paper. Our hope is that an effort will be made to preserve these files for use by researchers of future years. For in them--and in the files of its predecessors if they have been kept--will be found much of the history of Briggs during the first six decades of the twentieth century.

By way of a bit of history, I went from Briggs to Bertram in 1903 with P. H. and H. B. Burke when they established the Bertram Monitor in the late summer of that year. The Monitor was followed by the Bertram Banner--and that by the Enterprise. So by one name or another, Bertram has had a newspaper almost continuously for nearly sixty years.

--E.L.

"GUM SPRINGS" SHOWS UP AGAIN

Back on page one we mentioned four instances in which we had found the name "Gum Springs" in type or script. A fifth instance has just come to light--in part of an old copy of the Burnet Bulletin for September 18, 1891. Through the courtesy of Mr. Chester Kincheloe, editor and publisher of today's Burnet Bulletin, we are reproducing part of a column which appeared in the Bulletin of July 26, 1962. This quotation more properly belongs back around page 3, but inasmuch as stencils had already been cut for that part of the book when the old Bulletin was found we are reproducing the column here.

The column in question is an itemization of funds allocated to schools in Burnet County for the year beginning September 1, 1891. Some idea of the changes which have been brought about by good roads, modern methods of transportation, and consolidation, can be gained from the fact that from fifty-four "districts" in 1891 the number has been reduced to four today--Burnet, Marble Falls, Bertram, Briggs. Be that as it may, we are pleased to note that for the school year 1891-92 the Gum Springs school received an allotment of \$491.70! And we have a pretty good idea how the money was spent.

Mr. R. E. Ward was principal of the Gum Springs school in 1891-92; Miss Fannie Landrum was the second teacher. And knowing something about the pay for teachers in those days, our guess would be that of the \$491.70 Mr. Ward and Miss Landrum received \$450. This figure is based on the assumption that the school "term" was five months and that Mr. Ward and Miss Landrum received respectively \$50 and \$40 per month. The balance of \$41.70 very probably went for chalk and erasers, a rope and bucket for the well, the replacing of several broken window panes, a joint or two of stovepipe and a cord or two of wood--at six bits a cord!

Two reasons prompt us to reproduce parts of the column here. First, we want to set it down as a matter of record; second, it will recall for old-timers the names of schools once neighbors to old Gum Springs--schools which many of them attended as youngsters but which today live in memory only.

We especially like the note of finality--implied at least--in the last paragraph. Given but a single guess seventy years later, ours would be that a trustee of the Poole Branch school at Joppa took the authorities at their word and pasted the list on a board in his home.

1891 BULLETIN FOUND ON FAIRES RANCH

While recently remodeling the William Faires home, formerly owned by H. Clay Faires, in the Joppa community, Marrs Wyatt of Bertram found a part of a copy of the Burnet Bulletin printed September 18th, 1891, pasted on a board that measured 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide taken from a wall in the building. One interesting article in this issue of the Burnet Bulletin gives a report about Burnet County school finances dated Sept. 1, 1891.

"GUM SPRINGS" SHOWS UP AGAIN

The school article shows that there were fifty-four public schools in Burnet County in 1891 compared to only four public schools in the county in 1962. The report follows:

BURNET COUNTY SCHOOLS IN 1891

Hamilton Valley	\$ 47.00	Bethel	\$ 212.40
Providence	150.40	Strickling	101.12
Russell Gabriel	122.20	Poole Branch	267.90
Mill Creek	103.40	Gum Springs	491.70
Live Oak	123.60	Pecan	164.50
Langford	188.45	Oakalla	162.50
Priest	56.40	South Rocky	162.00
Naruna and White Bluff amounts torn off			
Stephens Bend	34.40	Barker	56.40
"O. K."	131.25	Colorado Chapel	147.35
Hoover's Valley	270.64	Spring Creek	343.30
Morgan Creek	191.70	Lone Star	211.35
Elm Grove	258.50	Pleasant Grove	80.00
Center Point	235.00	Hairston Creek	116.00
Holland	151.68	Lavista	255.73
Toby	267.90	Crownover Chapel	390.90
Pleasant Valley	140.38	Shovel Mountain	169.16
Rockvale	197.40	Spicewoods Springs	164.60
Hickory Creek	216.50	Richland	152.60
Spanish Oak	131.70	Cow Creek	173.70
Oatmeal	327.45	Hill	134.60
Cedar Hill (colored)	66.90	Mount Blanc	230.30
Bertram	225.60	Prairie Point	66.60
Marley Springs	114.90	Jennings Creek	101.20
South Gabriel	251.30	Francis Chapel	182.60
Pleasant Hill	301.10	Marble Falls	844.15
Mormon Mills	103.50		
Amt. reserved out of fund for 1891 incidentals			394.56
Amt. transferred to Burnet City			235.00
Amt. transferred to other counties			662.70
Total amt. to be disposed of in 1891-92			\$11,994.93
By bal. on hand in gen'l fund Sept. 1, 1891			129.76
By State apportionment for 1891-1892			9,994.50
By Co. apportionment for 1891-1892			676.10
By credits to various schools from last year			1,194.57
Total income to county for 1891-1892			\$11,994.93

If trustees and teachers will observe the above, they will avoid the necessity of calling on the County Judge to find out the amount to the credit of any particular school in the county.

THE DIAL TELEPHONE COMES TO BRIGGS

On February 27, 1963, just about sixty years after the first telephone wire was strung into Briggs from the south, the Burnet Telephone Company announced that the Briggs telephone system would be converted to the dial system between 7:00 a. m. and 8:00 a. m. the following morning, February 28, 1963, the exchange to be REgional 8. All of which can only mean that we have come a long way from the day of milady's giving the old wall telephone a crank and saying to the operator "Ring Grace, please." And of course if Grace happened to be visiting Florence that morning, the operator in her omniscience knew of that visit and answered by saying, "Grace is over at Florence's this morning; I'll ring over there."

Then we became a bit more sophisticated as more telephones were added. A lot of us who lived within a stone's throw of the telephone exchange had our own line. We had our own individual number--1, 6, 17... But the people a little farther out--indeed for miles into the country--had to share party lines, and we became "one long and two shorts" or "one short, one long, one short" on line 3. There were various ways of listing these numbers in the old two-page directory; the more common were L2S3, SLS3. The party line still exists even in our more complicated systems of the sixties but one would never guess it by looking at today's directories; he would become aware of it only by trying to break into the conversation between the teenage great-granddaughters of Grace and Florence.

Well, as more telephones were added the omniscience of the operator was stretched just about to its breaking point--she at long last asked us to call by number! But somehow or other she still knew when Grace and Florence were visiting, what family had a new baby, whose child had measles, or what kind of a dress Mary was going to wear for Friday night's shindig.

Automation has just about done away with the old-time operator. A few remain in the rural areas. But the great-granddaughters of Grace and Florence who live in Briggs today will call each other by dialing RE 8-1126, or whatever combination of letters and digits identifies them in today's directory. And of course if they happen to be on a party line they will go through the procedure of dialing some given number, the last figure of their number, and last figure of the number they are calling, and so on--or some other rigmarole. Verily progress has taken away the fun of ringing one long and two shorts on line three. Or of simply saying to the operator, "L2S3, please!"

* * *

As a sort of preview into what the science of telephony may have in store for us in the future, the compiler of these notes recalls two prophecies made at a recent meeting of telephone dignitaries. One was that the time will come when every child born in the United States will be given a telephone number which will be his for life. The other was that the telephone of the future will be the size of a pocket cigarette lighter. With it the

THE DIAL TELEPHONE COMES TO BRIGGS

owner may call any number in continental United States--or be called--regardless of whether he is sitting in his own living room, flying, playing golf, or mending the fence along the north side of the back forty. Sound fantastic? Not any more so than REgional 8-1126 would have sounded to Bob Pearce sixty years ago!

Or to Lillie, Lessie, or Dollie Harton a decade or so later.

* * *

In her "Briggs News" column in the Burnet Bulletin of March 14, 1963, Mrs. L. S. Skaggs mentions the passing of the "rural telephone switchboard" and pays a nostalgic tribute to the many fine operators of the last sixty years.

The board closed its doors and was abandoned March 1, 1963, some sixty years after it began operation in Briggs. During these many years the telephone company, as well as every subscriber, was blessed with having the finest operators known to the business. Not only were they efficient and courteous along the line of duty, but they went far beyond that when they personally took messages to non-subscribers or to those whose telephones were out of order, or answered emergency calls, or got out and fixed broken and grounded wires. They also served as a bureau of information, notifying the entire community of illness, deaths, fires, showers, all meetings of a public nature... We will miss this service.

And so the curtain falls on the Briggs Rural Telephone Company. Our guess is that that last sentence--"We will miss this service"--is the understatement of anno Domini 1963.

MISCELLANY

Fully 300 or more letters have been written and received in the compilation of these notes and the First Quarter-Century of the Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs School. While most of them have been more or less personal in nature, many of them do contain bits here and there which belong in this story. This section is therefore composed of excerpts from scores of letters which have come to us during the past five or six years. No effort has been made to arrange them in any order. In the main they appear just as their authors wrote them. However, in many instances some editing has been done for the sake of ease in reading.

ODDS AND ENDS

This method of mensuration would probably not stand up in court but it makes a good story. One day a man was trying to find out the width of a certain building in Briggs, whereupon Will Melton said: "I don't know how wide the building is but I do know how long it is. I am six feet tall. One day Mark Langford knocked me down five times between the front and back just as fast as I could get up. That makes the building thirty feet long!" This particular bit of fisticuffs occurred during the Christmas season, very probably in 1905. Following the customs of the times, most of the men would have their "Christmas trick"--and out of this particular "two-fingers" or so came a bruised forehead and a broken fist.

* * *

And then it would be interesting to know where this little "ditty" came from. Something like it can be found in many communities, particularly those whose histories run back to pioneer days.

Taylor's Gin
And Edgar Street;
Patterson's hotel
And nothing to eat.

* * *

Mill Creek, which rises a few miles northwest of Briggs to flow northeastwardly to the Lampasas River, got its name from an old mill in what was known about 1900 as the W. A. (Luck) Nichols pasture.

* * *

Mr. J. C. Wright was the first school superintendent to have a graduating class--1919.

ODDS AND ENDS

Ellis Bennett operated the first peddling wagon out of Briggs--out of Mr. Steve Taylor's and Mr. J. W. Edgar's store in the decade 1880-1890.

* * *

Long before Mr. J. W. Edgar married he batched in a little room back of his store. He had a small heater on which he cooked and a cot on which he slept--the room was too small for a bed. Two men once made the mistake of trying to pull off a holdup on Mr. Edgar. He cracked one of them over the head with a lantern. They escaped but were caught later--one of them quite the worse for the experience.

* * *

It was right at the turn of the century that the great "sham battle" was fought. It might have been our way of welcoming the 20th century--and it might have been a year or two later. Anyway, great preparations were made to shoot anvils, Roman candles, skyrocketes, firecrackers. Sides were chosen--like for a spelling match--fully twenty-five or more to a side. Everybody turned out for the event--everybody! All was going in great fashion until two casualties were suffered. In the first Jim Rhodes was hit in an eye by a shot from a Roman candle. It was a painful injury but Jim recovered with his sight unimpaired. The second casualty was Mr. W. E. Clink-scales. Thinking to protect himself for the fight he had put on one of those old-time yellow slickers--the kind that are protected from water with a foul-smelling fish oil. Well, everything went all right until shots from Roman candles began sticking to his slicker! He was soon literally on fire. We then had to call a halt to the warfare, pull his coat off, and roll him on the ground to put out the fire. It could have been serious, but as it turned out we had a great time--and were out quite a bit of money for the affair.

* * *

The first filling station in Briggs was of a pump type that had a hand pump something like that of a kerosene oil container. There was no bowl or other visible means to indicate how much gasoline was being put in a car. That depended upon the operator; somehow he knew when to stop if, say, five gallons were asked for. The pump stood in the street at the edge of the porch in front of the C. A. Baker hardware store. Mr. John Baker, the manager and only salesman in the store, also sold gasoline. This would be around 1915--possibly a year before, a year or two later.

* * *

In the early days of this century--long before a square foot of pavement appeared around Briggs--transportation came to a complete stop during the long rainy spells. Ruts hub-deep were common in Main street; the only way to get around was by horseback. Florice Cloud Williams of Florence remembers when the road from the Cloud home about two and a half miles west of

ODDS AND ENDS

Briggs was impassable for weeks. "I don't remember the year, but we ran out of provisions. Papa removed the wagon bed, hitched four horses to the running gear and went to Lampasas to get food." We have done a little checking for Florice and have come to the conclusion that the rainy spell of which she speaks was during the fall or winter months of 1904--possibly the spring of 1905.

* * *

The first three automobiles in Briggs were owned by Mr. C. H. Wykes, Sr., Mr. Mark Patterson and Mr. W. E. Clinkscales. Mr. Wyke's car was the first one registered in Burnet County; it had wheels like those on a buggy. Mr. Patterson's car was the 64th; Mr. Clinkscales the 176th. The test of the "pulling" power of the early-day cars in Briggs was their ability to "pull the hill" on the Mt. Moriah cemetery road. If a car could make those two hills on the way out and back it had "power."

* * *

One hunting season along about 1894 Mark Langford conceived the idea of using a headlight or lantern for night hunting. On his first night out two bright spots showed up unexpectedly. Mark drew a bead and shot one of Mr. Mark Patterson's mules between the eyes. He reported the accident to Mr. Patterson the next day--and then spent a good part of the hunting season working out the price which Mr. Patterson put on his mule.

* * *

One Sunday afternoon in the summer of 1903 or 1904 following a revival meeting Rev. J. J. Thompson of Florence was baptizing converts in Rocky Creek. They were queued up in a line--which was uncerimoniously broken when a number of snakes began squirming out from the bank. Rev. Thompson grabbed a stick and thrashed out at the snakes--which made for cover along the opposite bank. Once order was restored the rites were continued until all were baptized.

* * *

This anecdote about Mr. A. B. Jackson probably should be omitted. Certainly no offense is intended in relating it, as will be obvious when it is finished. Mr. Jackson, familiarly known by everyone as Asa, owned a small business in Briggs in the early 1900s, served as a justice of the peace and notary public, and was a regular attendant upon Sunday school and church services. In keeping with the practice of those days, he could always be expected to recite a verse of scripture when the time came. For years on end his one verse was "Jesus wept"--which of course led to his being called "Jesus wept" Jackson. No one meant any harm by it and Mr. Jackson probably enjoyed it as much as anybody.

* * *

ODDS AND ENDS

A poolroom was opened in Briggs soon after 1900. Young blades in long pants (in those days a boy never put on long pants until he entered his teens) feeling no compunction about going where the inspiration of the moment led them felt no particular inhibition about making their way into the poolroom. Since minors were not allowed to enter such institutions, the proprietor was compelled to put up a sign over the door.

NO MINOR SALLOW
EDIN THE POOL HALL

Spacing of letters was not quite as regular as the typewriter makes them but everybody made the sign read "No minor sallow edin the pool hall." The more brazen paid no attention to it, always disclaiming their inability to read the sign. But all of that was peremptorily put to an end when the proprietor made himself unmistakably clear: "You know damn well what it means--it means you can't go in there!"

* * *

Some kind of a prize must go to Clarence Dillingham for his long memory. Among other items which he has sent us for these annals is a copy of "Darby and Joan," the "piece" which he recited at the close of the Gum Springs school in 1892. Mr. R. E. Ward was principal of the school that year and Clarence was all of eight or ten years old. The poem is a long one and how he can remember it after 70 years is a mystery--as is also the question of why such a "piece" would be assigned to one of his age. There is a lot of humor in "Darby and Joan." It is too long to quote in full; the first verse goes like this:

When Darby saw the setting sun,
He swung his scythe and home he run,
Sat down, drank off his quart, and said:
"My work is done, I'll go to bed."

* * *

Down around the old potbellied stove in the drugstore on cold rainy days we had deer hunting, fishing, and hound-dog stories all day long every day in the week. The fish got pretty big at times and the distance at which some of those bucks were shot--well, you'd be surprised at just how far a good shot could kill a buck! Music--from those hound-dog boys--how they turned old "Coley" loose in that flat below the rock fence--just how they knew from his baying that he had picked up the trail. Each fellow knew his dog's bark, knew just when he had "treed"--and most of the time what the varmint was that the dog had brought to bay.

* * *

ODDS AND ENDS

Sometime right after the turn of the century Ester Caskey bought the first phonograph ever heard in Briggs. It was an Edison machine with wax cylinder records. The most popular record was "Turkey in the Straw"--which Ester played over and over to the delight of everyone. Someone--his name long since forgotten--when he first heard the machine, remarked: "I hear it all right, but damned if I believe it."

* * *

One form of amusement, which as likely as not would be the talk of the town for days on end, was the verbal word battles between Odas Moore and John Binnion. Mr. Binnion was for many years the town butcher while Odas Moore was clerk in the S. R. Dillingham general mercantile store. They would literally spend hours together planning pranks to be played on innocent bystanders. Once the "stage" was set, they would begin what seemed to be a friendly discussion. One would take exception here, the other there; they would grow louder, gradually irritating each other until a fight seemed inevitable unless the "victim" proved to be a peacemaker. And of all the people to be caught in their traps, who should fall hardest but Mr. J. S. Smith!

Mr Smith had served the people of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs as principal of the school for several years, had later moved to San Angelo, but was lately returned to his ranch near Briggs. Everybody knew him as a refined and peace-loving gentleman, including the antagonists in question. One day he chanced to enter the meatmarket to make a purchase--and Odas Moore saw the opportunity for fun. He rushed across the street from the store, entered the market, exchanged the usual civilities with Mr. Smith, and tore into Mr Binnion about some fictitious sale of bad meat. He declaimed loud and long so that all could hear that the meat was bad, the service poor, the place dirty. At long last Mr. Binnion announced that he had heard enough and waving a meat cleaver in a menacing gesture ordered Odas out of the market. Mr. Smith fell for the role of peacemaker, but the more he tried to calm them down the more furious the word battle became. He got himself in between them but they pushed him aside, raved and ranted, pawed the earth as they shouted dire threats at each other. Mr. Smith could stand it no longer. He rushed out into the street to find help before someone was killed. Men rushed to the scene of action--found the joke on themselves and on Mr. Smith for whose benefit the whole thing had been staged. For when help finally came Mr. Binnion and Odas were in peals of laughter over Mr. Smith's having fallen for their little game.

Let a "victim" come along and John Binnion and Odas Moore could be counted on to put on a real "fight."

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

* * *

ODDS AND ENDS

Mr. S. R. (Rem) Skaggs was batching on his Mill Creek ranch in the 1880s when a polished gentleman from the East--probably Massachusetts--named Dwight W. Hooper in drifting south made his way to this lonely batchelor's quarters and proceeded to join the ranks of the ranchers. He learned rapidly under the tutelage of Mr. Skaggs, Jack Juby and others how to feed, shear and market sheep--but in other ways of the ranch he was woefully deficient.

One spring when the shearing time was finished Mr. Hooper asked Mr. Skaggs how he could wash his overalls and get the thick coat of sheep oil out of them. As they were, no prop was needed to hold them up--they were stiff enough to stand alone. Mr. Skaggs, a veteran of such things, told him to build a fire around the wash pot, fill it with a little water, add soap and some lye. This Mr. Hooper did. Thinking that if a little lye was good more would be better, he put in a full half of a can. The fire burned, the water boiled--and Mr. Hooper "punched" the wash. When he thought they might be clean he put the "punching stick" under his overalls and lifted them out of the pot--that is, what was left of them. For all that he could find was the suspenders and the thick seams along the sides! In utter disgust he turned to Mr. Skaggs and asked, "Rem, what has happened to my overalls?"

This episode of Mr. Hooper's washing his overalls Mr. Skaggs told many a time, always with a loud chuckle of laughter. But it wasn't funny to Mr. Hooper!

After several years as a ranchman, Mr. Hooper went to Marble Falls where he opened an office for legal work of all kinds. He became a CPA and was an efficient public servant until his death. He married a Miss Claypool in Marble Falls and they had one son and twin daughters.

Long years after Mr. Hooper had established himself in Marble Falls, it was my pleasure and privilege to take Mr. Skaggs for a day's visit with him. They had not seen each other for over twenty years--and they were getting along in years themselves. But no two friends ever enjoyed a few hours of reminiscing more than they did that day. They put out of their minds everything of the present and relived their batching and working days--two great men of the past, one of whom was to become my father-in-law.

--Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

* * *

ODDS AND ENDS

Let us close these annals of Briggs, its times and its people, by paying our respects to two of the greatest checker players ever to reach the king row: Uncles Matt Brown and Billy Williams. For years on end, usually on Saturday afternoons, and frequently oftener--they went at it hammer and tongs on the porch of Mr. Tom Hall's general store or at some other convenient spot. In inclement weather they moved inside, but wherever they played they always had a following. As a general rule their audiences were strictly impartial--one day they would root for Uncle Matt, the next day for Uncle Billy. Of the thousands of games they played, probably 90% of them wound up as draws. They were good--and they knew it. They concocted a sort of jargon which was utter nonsense and of which they made good use when one led the other into a trap which resulted in taking three for one, if not in fact in winning the game. One bit of abracadabra became a byword in the community--"He just don't understand the systematical part of the cupiniticies," or however one might spell it. Great emphasis was placed on that last word so that it came out "cu-pi-night-i-sees." This was the coup de grace, the finishing stroke, the cry of triumph of the winner whereby announcement was made to all of the world in general--and to bystanders in particular--that the last king had been captured and the game won. Let that become a fait accompli and the winner would swing his arms as if to take off in flight, draw in a deep breath and roar out--"He just don't understand the systematical part of the cu-pi-night-i-sees!"

Two finer gentlemen never lived. They played checkers for keeps but always in good fun. A cross word never escaped the lips of one toward the other. Victory and defeat were simply part of the game, and in the long run probably came to each in like proportions. Uncle Matt went on to a greater King Row in 1906, Uncle Billy twenty years later in 1926. Those of us who can remember being entertained by their bantering, by their threats to "decopitate that gentleman"--referring to the first king crowned--like to conjure up some far-off corner of the universe where they are at it again--and by listening closely can hear one of the other exclaim: "He just don't understand...."

--E.L.

PERSONAL NOTES OF APPRECIATION

By Mrs. L. S. Skaggs

As these annals of Briggs, its time and its people, are being finished, and as a final note of appreciation, I would like to thank the many people who have furnished most of the information. Scores have dug up details of the past; a like number have answered questions concerning the history of Briggs; all of them working as one have made it possible for us to put together these stories of another day.

Our thanks go first to Ernest Langford who willingly consented to edit, write and re-write, and then compile and assemble the ramblings and disconnected notes and comments which have been gathered through the greater part of five years. Without his help there would have been no book. Backing him up and standing ready at every moment were Edwin Harton and Clarence Dillingham. Through their efforts many details of what might have become a forgotten past have been unraveled. Both are native sons and lifelong residents of Briggs. Their interest has been unflagging and to them we owe a special debt of gratitude.

As for me, all that I could do was to ask questions and jot down the answers. And for information thus gathered I am indebted to W. T. Harton, Mrs. J. E. Moore, E. E. Taylor, L. W. Stewart, Tennie Hasty, and others whose stories are in the book.

Even though Briggs has dwindled through the years, it will live forever in the hearts of us whose roots run deep here and whose memories linger on.

Let time take whatever toll it will--THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A BRIGGS!

* * *

By Edwin Harton

My earliest recollections are of conversations in our family as we sat around the old fireplace or the supper table. There my parents, my older brothers and sisters, often talked of the early days of Gum Springs-Taylor's Gin-Briggs and of the people who had settled here long ago. And among other names they mentioned were the names of families who had been their friends but who for one reason or another had moved away from our little town. Such names as Griffin, DeWolf, Eubank, Draper, Cloud, Langford, and many others. For years and years I would hear these and other names called until it seemed that I knew all of them. One name that was called as often as that of any other was that of a son of one of these families--the name of an old Briggs boy whom I really did not come to know too well until the times of our homecomings, although his family lived just across the street from my family when I was born. Well, of course I am referring to Ernest Langford, who until his retirement about five years ago was head of the division of architecture at Texas A&M College. Although over fifty years have passed since Mr. Langford lived in Briggs he has never lost his love for the place of his boyhood--and

PERSONAL NOTES OF APPRECIATION

we are all the better off for it. For without his help it is doubtful if these annals would have ever been put together.

So now we come to the last page of the book and the time to thank Mr. Langford for all of his help. He has worked long hours, traveled here and there at his own expense--never even accepted even a thin dime for gasoline--says that the pleasure he has derived from putting these notes together has been pay enough for him. Smart enough to spend nearly fifty years as a college professor, he never became "smart" enough to forget Briggs. And that is our good fortune. I can't speak for all of the others but I can speak for Edwin Harton. May the good Lord bless him. We will always remember him. As we read and re-read these annals we will always be thankful that one of "our" boys made his way in this workd--but above all that he never lost interest in his old home town.

It will be obvious to all who read these annals that Mr. Langford has been wonderfully blessed with an able "reporter"--I just don't know what else to call her--Mrs. Stella Shaffer Skaggs. Miss Stella came to Briggs as a young school teacher--she married one of our boys--Snow Skaggs--and has lived here ever since. She has been interested in these annals since we began to talk about this book several years ago. In fact some of the material was gathered by her at least twenty years ago. She has driven miles and miles in search of old pictures, family histories, newspaper clippings--anything that would throw light on the early days of Briggs. A constant booster for everything that is good; never tiring; always with a smile and a word of cheer, she has enriched the lives of those of us who have known her so long. To her we also say, "Thank you, and may the good Lord bless you."

To Lisa West Warren
One of my favorite pupils.
Mrs. L. S. Skaggs.

The cost of producing these Annals of Briggs, its times and its people, has been underwritten by the Briggs Homecoming Association. All funds received from sales will accrue to the Association, and all money received in excess of the cost of production will be used for the maintenance of the Briggs cemeteries.